











The Saints and Servants of God.

THE LIVES

OF

ST. JOSEPH CALASANCTIUS,

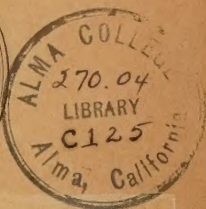
FOUNDER OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS,

AND OF THE

BLESSED IPPOLITO GALANTINI,

FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF  
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

"Gaude Maria Virgo, cunctas hæreses sola interemisti in  
universo mundo."—*Antiph. Ecclesiæ.*



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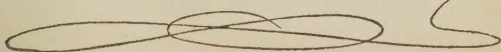


We hereby approve and sanction the Series of Lives of the Canonized and Beatified Saints, the Servants of God declared Venerable, and others commonly reputed to have died in the odour of sanctity, now in course of publication by the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, and we cordially recommend it to the Faithful, as calculated to promote the glory of God and of His Saints, the increase of devotion, and the spread of our holy Religion.

Given at London, the Feast of the Purification of our B. Lady, A. D. 1850.

*Nichols*

*Bishop of Melipotamus*








TO  
THE REGULAR CLERGY  
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND,  
THE CHILDREN  
OF ST. BENEDICT AND ST. BERNARD,  
ST. DOMINICK AND ST. FRANCIS,  
AND THE SONS  
OF THE HOLY IGNATIUS,  
THE GREAT MASTER OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE,  
AND THE NURSING-FATHER OF SAINTS AND MARTYRS,  
WHO,  
IN THE STRAITNESS AND NEGLECT  
OF THEIR UNHONOURED CLOISTERS,  
OR THE CHEERLESS SOLITUDE  
OF THEIR HIRED LODGING,  
HAVE JOYFULLY EMBRACED THE POVERTY OF JESUS,  
AND EARNED BY LOVING ZEAL  
THE CROWN OF MARTYRDOM,  
AND WHO,  
THROUGH SCENES OF AWFUL SACRILEGE,  
AND TIMES OF BITTER PERSECUTION,  
THROUGH THE LONG AND WEARY VISITATION  
OF ACTIVE MALICE OR OF COLD CONTEMPT,  
HAVE PERPETUATED,  
AMONGST THEIR UNWORTHY COUNTRYMEN,  
THE BLESSED LINEAGE  
OF THEIR HOLY FOUNDERS.

ST. WILFRID'S,  
FEAST OF ST. BERNARD,  
M. DCCC. XLVII.





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## PREFACE.

THE Lives contained in the present volume, are both of them translations from the Italian. That of St. Joseph Calasanctius was written by a priest of his order, and was compiled almost exclusively from the Processes of his Canonization.—The Life of the Blessed Ippolito Galantini was written by Fabio Sorgenti, a secular priest, and dedicated, by the Congregation of Christian Doctrine, to the then reigning Pontiff, Leo XII.

*The Oratory,  
Feast of St. Raphael, 1850.*

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A. M. D. G.

A

SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF  
SAINT JOSEPH CALASANCTIUS,

“OF THE MOTHER OF GOD.”

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BOOK I.

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CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF THE SAINT.

To write a compendium of the life of a great hero, is surely very different from merely sketching the plan of a large edifice: in the latter case, the artist, by means of his scale and a due attention to proportions, may give a correct idea of an immense edifice, within the narrow limits of a sheet of paper; whereas, when we would compress within a few pages the Life of a great man, without, at the same time, lessening the extent of his vast merits, we find ourselves at a loss for rule and compass. Such a life is but a tissue of virtuous actions, manifesting the spirit of sanctity which generated them. If we would compress these actions, we must either silently pass them over, or we must disfigure them: the one diminishes our estimation of the

subject; the other darkens it; whilst both deform it. In this sort of abridgment, those saints suffer the least, who have been destined by God to a life solely contemplative; or who, having lived on earth but for a brief period, have left but few distinguished or varied actions for the pen of the biographer. It being my duty to write an abridged account of the Life of Saint Joseph Calas Sanctius of the Mother of God, I have to experience all the difficulties and disadvantages of superabundance. He was a saint from the very cradle, and he unremittingly led the life of a saint for the long period of ninety-two years: he discharged important functions in several churches in Spain; whilst in Rome his charity was, as it were, engulfed in a vast ocean of toil and fatigue in favour of poor children, and of every sort of misery. He was the Founder of a Religious Order, erected and propagated by his own efforts. He kept in view the conversion of heretics; and God, who intended to try and refine his virtue, permitted him to be placed in most painful circumstances,—in circumstances best calculated to crucify the heart. Such is the hero, whose Life it is my task to circumscribe within the limits of a compendium. I must of necessity entirely pass over many facts; despoil others of their details, and content myself with merely presenting the skeleton of his sanctity, invested with its integuments and principal sinews, though even these must be impaired and diminished. Popular opinion at present is in favour of abridgments; and in

these it is tacitly expected that the actions of the individual should serve as the structure to the book, and not the structure to the actions. If perchance the pious reader should not here find all that is necessary to the full development of the virtues of the Saint, he will at least find sufficient to admire and to imitate.

Saint Joseph was born at Petralta in Arragon, on a Friday, the 11th of September, 1556. His parents, Don Pietro Calasanctius, and Donna Maria Gastonia, were both of noble extraction; however, as it is our object to give an account of his virtues, rather than of his exalted pedigree, a dissertation on nobility of blood and birth would be superfluous here. Joseph was the last-born of five children, two boys and three girls. As he advanced in age his excellent parents were careful to make him learn such vocal prayers as are usually taught to infants: they instructed him in the mysteries of faith, and studiously instilled into his heart principles of sound morality; even in his infancy his propensity to everything connected with religion and piety amounted to transport. When he could scarcely lisp, he undertook the daily recital of the Rosary of his own accord; a practice which he maintained to the end of his life; and he used to invite the servants to join with him in this devotion: in fact, the admirable power of grace very soon began to manifest itself in Joseph. Hearing some one speak of the devil as being the enemy of God, he felt a holy indignation against him; and in his childish simplicity,



imagining the fiend to be like unto himself, he ran through all the rooms of the house in search of him, that he might fight and slay this enemy of God. One day he contrived to elude the watchfulness of his attendants, and slipped out into the street with his little toy-sword in his hand, where collecting all the children he met with, he invited them to go with him in pursuit of the devil, to drive him quite out of the world : surely no error could be more innocent, and at the same time more beautiful : this ideal, transitory assault, was but the prelude to a true and lasting warfare. Joseph was only five years old when this little incident occurred. Our Lord moreover, was pleased to illustrate him with the spirit of prophecy whilst yet a mere child. Don Pietro his father, was commissioned to preside over the distribution of the common fund of provisions in Petralta, during a season of extreme scarcity. He took all reasonable precautions, and like a provident steward, had provided, by anticipation, for a fresh supply of corn : being convinced that the fidelity and activity of the merchants would be better secured by prompt payment than by mere promises, he entrusted them beforehand with very considerable sums of gold : for once in his life he seemed likely to be deceived ; the public granaries were empty, and still there was no appearance of the supply he had already paid for. The embarrassment was great ; Don Pietro naturally began to distrust the merchants, and felt that no small share of blame would be attached to him, as not having taken wiser measures where-

by to avert so imminent a famine. One morning, whilst he was in this state of distressing anxiety, little Joseph suddenly appeared before him, and in cheerful infantine accents, bade him place full confidence in God ; promising him that he would very soon be relieved from all this perplexity : that very same evening the supply of corn arrived at Petralta ; and the father was the first person who had occasion to venerate the lamp of prophecy in his own dear child.

As soon as Joseph had acquired the first rudiments, his father determined on sending him to Estadilla, to go through his course of humanities, which were there taught with great success and applause. On passing thither, the youth soon gave evidence that his virtue needed not the influence of his parents' eyes ; but that it was grounded on, and nourished by solid inward principles. Not only did he persevere in, but he even increased his practices of piety ; his whole plan of life was but an alternation of acts of devotion, and application to study ; the latter being transformed into a virtue, because directed to supernatural ends. He professed and practised a special and ardent devotion to the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, and to the Blessed Mother of God, whom he had long before chosen to be his advocate. Visiting the churches, assisting at the sacred functions, sermons, catechetical instructions, the daily recital of our Lady's office, with other private prayers, filled up the measure of his time, especially on festivals, of which he strove

to sanctify every moment. He prepared himself for the important act of his first communion, by multiplying his prayers, abstinences, and other exercises of Christian virtue; frequent communion was the grand object of his desires, and he regularly approached the holy table on every festival, unless his spiritual director recommended otherwise, and he always received his Divine Lord with indescribable recollection and fervour.

Such brilliant piety, coupled with such remarkable modesty, could not do otherwise than strike the eyes of all his fellow-students, to whom the masters themselves proposed Joseph as a model; as is usual in such cases, the dissolute and idle, which in large schools generally constitute the majority, could not endure a virtue which served only to expose and condemn their own vices. Despairing, however, of being able to overcome him by public assault, they had recourse to artifices and malicious raillery; by constantly speaking to him and of him in a tone of mockery and contempt, they hoped to render him odious to all the rest, and so compel him to withdraw from their society; such schemes, however, only succeed with cowardly weak-minded youths; the virtue of Joseph was too solid and robust to be injured by such wanton efforts; ultimately this very trial served to protect him from further contumely, not a few of his deriders being themselves won over to virtue by his constancy; for it is a general maxim with young people, that though the lip

may ridicule true virtue, it is in reality always admired in the recesses of the heart.

Joseph was endowed with an acute wit and a tenacious memory, both of material service to him in his studies. At the age of fifteen he had finished his course of rhetoric, and gave proofs of considerable talent, writing in verse and prose with great elegance and energy, both in Latin and Spanish. In the year 1680, the vicar of Benavarre, still carefully preserved a volume in manuscript, containing several of Joseph's poetical effusions in honour of the Blessed Trinity, the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, and other pious subjects. When he had completed his course of rhetoric, Don Pietro recalled him from Estadilla to Petralta, intending him to embrace the military career, hoping to see renewed in him the glories of his illustrious ancestors, several of whom had immortalized the name of Calasanctius by their daring feats of arms. This unlooked-for determination on the part of his father, threw Joseph into the utmost consternation; he gazed with an eye of indifference on the vain honours of the world, for he aspired to another sort of warfare, and, in his heart, contemplated other enterprises; having long before resolved to consecrate himself entirely to God. So great was his affliction, and so earnest his entreaties, that he at length extorted his father's consent for the further prosecution of his studies; and repaired for this purpose to the university of Lerida, on the confines of Catalonia and Arragon.

## CHAPTER II.

HIS STAY IN THE UNIVERSITIES OF LERIDA,  
VALENCIA, AND ALCALA.

ON arriving at Lerida, Joseph's first care was to choose a good spiritual director, and a competent master of philosophy; being most anxious that the former should be well skilled in the science of the saints, and the latter in natural and acquired knowledge. Prayer and prudent inquiry were his guides in the search: he pursued the same method at every change of residence. He chose our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph for the protectors and patrons of his studies. Here, more than ever, he devoted himself to corporal austerities, which as a child he had loved and practised at Petralta and Estadilla; he also spent much of his time in reading the Lives of the Saints. He ate very sparingly, and only once a day; his fasts on bread and water were frequent, his rest was but short, often sleeping on the bare ground, with his head upon a stool; he familiarized himself with hair-cloths and disciplines: how strange and admirable it is that the rigours of penance should have such charms for those who are the most innocent of heart! His favourite occupations were to instruct the children of the poor in the Christian doctrine, to serve the sick in the hospitals, to visit prisoners, and to bestow alms on the destitute. Such exalted virtue, accom-



panied by extraordinary learning and talent, placed him at once beyond the reach of envy, and the contempt of the profligate: he soon acquired such respect in the university, that the Arragonese youth, (according to a custom of their own,) elected him for their prince. He only made use of this honourable distinction for the profit of those who had conferred it upon him; sweetly encouraging them to application in their studies, and to strict integrity of conduct. He was by no means deficient in persuasive eloquence, gentleness of manner, penetration of mind, and he knew how to win esteem; all of which are efficacious auxiliaries in the hands of those who are charged with the correction of others. A young noble, Matteo Garcia, always called Joseph his angel guardian. There was a certain inconsiderate, intolerant youth, much addicted to mischievous fun, which, as usually happens, frequently involved him in quarrels and trouble; in his moments of disgrace, he invariably had recourse to Calasancius, to whom, strange to say, he had strongly attached himself; Joseph not only managed to draw him out of his difficulties, but gained such an ascendancy over him, as completely to change his very nature. When any dissensions arose among the young students, they generally elected Calasancius to be their arbitrator, who always restored peace and satisfied all parties. In his regard at least, the rank of prince was no sinecure; it gave him much to do, and all was done for the benefit of others. The famo

of Joseph's learning and piety soon reached his father's ears, who rejoiced thereat exceedingly; and he, who had previously been so averse to his son's pursuing the career of letters, now exhorted him to persevere in it; he even recommended him to undertake the study of civil and canon law. The holy youth, who aspired to nothing less than the clerical state, took advantage of his father's present favourable dispositions, to extract from him his permission to receive the tonsure. On the 11th of April, 1575, being then in his nineteenth year, he was tonsured by the bishop of Urgelle, his diocesan. He was anxious, however, to bind himself with still stronger bands to the sanctuary. Being urged by grace, and by a certain general idea, (which during the course of education, may safely imprint itself on the hearts of the innocent, to preserve them from a danger which as yet is not understood by them,) Joseph had hitherto most jealously guarded his virginal modesty; never had he permitted any of his companions, nor even his own mother, to see any part of his person uncovered; there was no one who could boast of having ever betrayed him into an incautious glance of the eye; no libertine could boast of having sullied his pure ears, even for a few moments, by inducing him to listen to an improper, much less an immodest expression. Joseph crowned his hitherto cherished purity by a vow of perpetual chastity, which he made before the altar of our Blessed Lady; so that he consummated the holocaust

almost as soon he assumed the clerical dress. When twenty years of age, he received the doctor's laurel wreath, having merited it in consequence of his indefatigable application, and his extraordinary talents.

In 1576 he passed from the university of Lerida to that of Valencia for the study of theology, because the most renowned professors were to be met with there; and here his modesty was exposed to a most difficult and formidable trial. Several connexions and friends of his family resided at Valencia, which imposed on Joseph the necessity of paying visits, and using the ordinary courtesies of polite society; for he was scrupulously exact in all duties of civility and relationship. Personally he possessed high attractions, and was very handsome; his manners were gentle and winning, with that sort of modest cheerfulness which is usually stamped on the countenances of those who are innocent of heart. These qualifications which Joseph possessed without caring for them, or rather without even knowing that he possessed them, engaged the affections of a young lady connected with him by family ties. Pleased with his first visits, she anxiously wished for their frequent recurrence, alleging their relationship as the pretext, and her own good will to assist him as a stranger; not to dwell unnecessarily on painful details, we will merely add that one day by a premeditated stroke, she renewed in our Joseph, the far-famed case of surprise related in holy writ, as having occurred to another Joseph at the court of Pharaoh. To young Ca-

lasanctius this was as a sudden thunder-bolt, which overwhelmed him with confusion, fear, and horror. He still retained his presence of mind, and promptly turned to God in his heart, whom he invoked aloud and instantly fled. He first repaired to a neighbouring church, where prostrate before our Lord, he thanked Him with tears of humility and gratitude, for having sustained him with His almighty hand, whilst on the edge of so dangerous a precipice; then, with lively tenderness, he renewed his vow of chastity; and, finally, devised means to withdraw himself from future similar danger, without in any manner compromising the honour of the young lady. With approbation of his confessor, he decided on his immediate departure from Valencia; pleaded the emergency of the case as an excuse for paying no farewell visits to any of his acquaintance; and repaired at once to Alcala in Castille, there to complete his course of theology.

On reaching Alcala, his first care, as usual, was to seek out an able spiritual director, and a suitable professor of theology. His chief anxiety, however, was to chastise himself severely for the serious fault committed in Valencia, charging himself with the whole weight of the lady's guilt, in whose conduct he beheld nothing but weakness, and therefore deserving of compassion; whilst he attributed to himself the sin of having fomented the seeds of the disorder, and consequently had rendered himself undeserving of pardon. Hair-cloths, disciplines, fasting, prayer, tears, and vigils, served in reality to avenge the crime

of which he imagined himself to be guilty. How humble and upright must that innocence be which thus knows how to look upon itself as guilty !

During his residence at Alcala, Joseph had the good fortune to become acquainted with Don Ascanio Colonna, then pursuing his studies in that university ; later, he became Cardinal and Viceroy of Arragon. An intimate friendship soon sprung up between them, which was afterwards renewed and strengthened in Rome, as will be explained in due course. In 1579 there seemed to be every prospect of his being obliged to interrupt his theological studies and return home, in consequence of two very painful domestic afflictions. His only brother Pietro, the eldest of the family, died without issue after three years' marriage, and in the very flower of his age ; his mother, Donna Maria Gastonia, in a short space of time, followed her first-born to the grave. Joseph's grief under the loss of two lives so precious to him, was still further aggravated by the entreaties of his father, who most urgently pressed his return to the paternal roof. He hoped to find in his only remaining son, not only solace in his state of desolation, but also the means of perpetuating his family ; for self-love causes most men to wish to live again, as we may say, in the persons of their posterity. These plans plunged Joseph into a state of sad perplexity ; being well aware that to mention the vow of perpetual chastity which he had already made to God, would only be inflicting a mortal wound on the

sorely lacerated heart of his affectionate father ; in whom a natural and innocent wish, supported in some degree by the right of parental authority, seemed to silence all scruple with regard to his opposition to an unnecessary sacrifice to religion. The cautious youth found means to escape from the dilemma, by pleading the plausible pretext of completing his course of theology, which would be useful to him in any condition of life ; and his immature age, being then only in his twenty-third year : his reasons, finally, overcame his father's objections, and in due time he took his degree in the faculty of theology.

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### CHAPTER III.

JOSEPH GOES TO JACCA. HIS ILLNESS. HE IS  
ORDAINED PRIEST.

As soon as Joseph had finished his course of theology, Providence opened a path for him, whereby he might avoid returning to his own country. Don Gasparo della Figuera, one of the king's councillors, and one of the most celebrated professors in Salamanca, was named for the Bish-  
opric of Jacca in 1580. Though personally unacquainted with young Calasactius, he had heard high praise of his learning and sanctity ; in consequence of which he sent him a pressing invitation to join him at Jacca, and be the companion of his home, his table, and his studies. Joseph gave his father to understand that he could not

with propriety decline the obliging offer of so illustrious a prelate ; and having thus secured his father's consent, he started at once for Jacca. Though Don Pietro's paternal ambition might have been satisfied with the splendid talents of his son, and the high estimation in which they were held, he could not, however, reconcile himself either to the absence or the celibacy of the sole prop of his family. At the end of a year, respect and obedience compelled Joseph to return home, that he might try to solace the anguish of his father ; to the inexpressible regret of the Bishop of Jacca, who deeply regretted the separation.

After the first salutations of welcome and affection, Don Pietro resumed his entreaties and arguments in order to induce his son to marry : not to afflict him with a decided negative, he did not mention his vow of chastity ; but sought to parry the attack by asking him to reflect upon the proposition ; and taking care that his countenance at least should give full evidence of his antipathy. He, however, remained true to his purpose, multiplying his prayers and corporal austerities ; imploring the patronage of his dearest advocate our Blessed Lady ; and beseeching his divine Lord to facilitate to him the means of accomplishing his project, without inflicting too much sorrow upon his father. Filial piety is a beautiful appendage to our fidelity to God ; and as it fears no surprise, so does it not deserve reproof.

The Almighty was pleased to hear the prayer

of His servant; and in order to console him He drew from the rich treasury of His mercy an apparent tribulation, which in His inscrutable designs was to be the source of his happiness. In the year 1582, Joseph was seized with a dangerous illness, which soon reduced him to the verge of the grave. This event plunged Don Pietro in an ocean of alarm, fear, and grief: Joseph, who clearly discerned herein the admirable dispositions of an all-loving Providence, took the opportunity of removing his obstinacy and resistance; and endeavoured to convince him that losses are in reality often an acquisition. He inspired him with his own lively sentiments of faith, and promised a happy issue, provided he would only concur with him in offering an oblation to the Most High: he asked permission to dedicate himself to God, by making a vow of sacerdotal consecration, if He should deign to preserve him from death. The afflicted father, who in such pressing danger, thought only of preserving the life of his dear son, which then seemed to be on the point of extinction, lost all desire for future grand-children, and willingly consented to the proposal; well satisfied to see his son amongst priests in the service of the Church, rather than have to weep for him amongst the dead. Joseph made his vow, and was immediately cured. This was a signal triumph of religion and of filial respect in him, ordained by the Providence of God, and it was crowned by the paternal love of Don Pietro.

Joseph was soon admitted to minor and holy



orders; and on the 17th of December, 1583, he was, to his indescribable consolation of soul, raised to the priesthood by the Bishop of Urgelle his Diocesan, being then twenty-eight years of age. We need not dwell upon his preparation for, nor on the recollection, fervour, purity, and tender tears with which he celebrated his first mass: for him, every mass was as the first; because deeply penetrated by the sanctity of the mystery, he every day brought the same dispositions and the same heart to the altar. He never omitted offering the divine sacrifice, unless hindered by serious infirmity. After his promotion to the priesthood he drew up a new rule of life for himself; extracted principally from the writings and spirit of the holy Fathers, and from the most severe canons and decrees of the Roman Pontiffs; adding thereto such other things as his own fervour suggested. Such was the man whom the Church then acquired and added to the number of her priests.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### EMPLOYMENTS OF OUR SAINT IN SPAIN.

THE new priest was immediately destined by God to a more laborious harvest than could be looked for at Petralta. Monsignor Figuera, the Bishop of Jacca, had recently been transferred to the See of Albarazzin, and was most anxious to recover the services of Joseph, whose assistance and

society had already proved so satisfactory to him. He flattered himself that as he was now raised to the priesthood, his father would more willingly consent to his absence, and his conjecture was not incorrect. Joseph gladly returned to this learned and pious prelate, who at once appointed him to be his theologian and confessor; as also to be the Examiner and Regulator of the clergy, although he was then only twenty-eight years of age. It is not, therefore, always a correct maxim, that prudence and judgment require to be matured by a great number of years, especially when learning and sanctity give them vigour. Young Calasanctius soon gave proofs of a future indefatigable and fruitful ministry. The reform he effected both in the clergy and people was too evident not to strike all eyes: having also undertaken the direction of the cloistered nuns, he led several of them to the most sublime degree of perfection.

In 1585, D. Gasparo della Figuera was again promoted from the bishopric of Albarazzin to that of Lerida, vacant by the death of D. Benedetto di Toco. Before he went to take possession of his new dignity, he was obliged, as one of the royal concillors, to repair to the castle of Monzon, where the congresses of the kingdoms of Arragon and Valencia, and the principality of Catalonia were held. Philip II. happened to be there just at this time, accompanied by a numerous and splendid retinue; having recently returned from Saragossa, where he had solemnly celebrated the nuptials of his

daughter Catherine, with Charles Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy. The bishop-elect of Lerida, accompanied by Calas Sanctius, his theologian and director, was introduced to this illustrious assemblage; the latter did not spend his time in idleness at Monzon; he contracted a close intimacy with the famous Augustinian, Father Aguilar, then universally celebrated for his sanctity and his talents as a preacher. He consulted Joseph, young as he was, on an affair of the highest importance, nothing less than instituting a strict reform in his order. He communicated his project to Joseph, who, after mature consideration, gave it his full approval, imparted it to his bishop, who in his turn mentioned it to Father Chaves, a Dominican, and the king's confessor, who undertook to consult his majesty upon the subject. The pious monarch committed the examination of the affair to a special commission, composed of six members, namely, Bishop Figuera, the king's confessor, the Count of Cincion, the Justiciary of Arragon, Father Aguilar himself, and Calas Sanctius, who was moreover appointed secretary to the commission. He drew up the letters and informations in the name of the king, which were afterwards presented by his ambassador at the court of Rome, to the Sovereign Pontiff Sixtus V., and to the other illustrious persons to whom they were addressed. This reform, so strongly promoted by Calas Sanctius, and which amongst the discalced Augustinians constitutes a distinct branch of the order, was happily completed in 1588, when Father

Gregorio Petrochini, general of the Augustinian order, repaired to Spain and held a provincial chapter at Toledo, where the royal intentions were seconded and carried into effect by means of a pontifical decree.

After this, Joseph was charged with another, and much more perplexing commission. The celebrated Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, that famous sanctuary of Catalonia, venerable for monastic discipline, rich in revenues and temporal jurisdiction, was at this time in a state of sad disorder. Party spirit divided the vassals and dependants into two furious factions; both resolved to gain their point and justify their respective pretensions by force of arms; both parties were unfortunately encouraged by various members within the monastery itself. The king eagerly strove to stem a torrent which threatened such destruction, but prudently appealed to ecclesiastical authority, to ascertain at once the origin of the evil, and either build up or destroy, as occasion should require, placing all things on a sure basis for the future. The king applied to the Pope for an apostolic visitor, requesting for this purpose the before-named Bonedetto di Toco, Bishop of Lerida: this prelate died eight months after the opening of his visitation, and Bishop Figuera was declared his successor. Taking his theologian, Calas Sanctius, with him to act as his secretary, he and one of the king's ministers set out immediately for Montserrat, and arrived there in October. The anxieties which Joseph underwent in the course

of this arduous duty, were fully compensated by the sweet consolation of dwelling in a sanctuary so highly favoured by Almighty God. As far as his own office was concerned, he soon found out that he was navigating a treacherous sea, full of rocks, shoals, and tempests. His fidelity was often tested by the proposal of large bribes, his firmness by audacious threats, and his discrimination and judgment were assailed with false reports. He was obliged to admonish his bishop to use due precautions for his own personal safety, lest, like his predecessor, he might lose his life before he could accomplish the object of his visitation. In effect, three months later, the zealous prelate fell ill, and died at the expiration of another month, leaving Joseph with the whole burthen of the affair upon his hands.

The royal minister, who had had full opportunity of judging of the prudence, learning, and sanctity of Calas Sanctius, consulted him alone, as to who would be the most proper person for continuing a visitation so replete with difficulties and dangers. He proposed Monsignor Cardona, Bishop of Vich, who consequently was elected visitor, and arrived at Montserrat on the 22nd of June, 1586. Whilst Joseph was awaiting the arrival of the new visitor, that he might consign the necessary documents to his own hands, he found a most gratifying recompense for his previous anxieties, and solace in his grief under the loss of his late revered pastor, in the full liberty he enjoyed of spending the greater part of his

time, during four months, in the holy chapel of Montserrat, in sweet intercourse with God and our Blessed Lady, whom he ever addressed in the language of confidence and love. The new visitor and the king's councillor united in their endeavours to persuade him to retain his post of secretary; but he was firm in his refusal, and resisted all their amicable violence on this point. His principal motive for withdrawing from the affair arose from the dangerous state of health to which his father Don Pietro was reduced, and of which he had but recently been apprised. Having placed the acts, &c. in the hands of proper authority, and given due information as to the plans he deemed most likely to insure the desired success (as in effect they did) he set out without delay and hastened to Petralta.

On his arrival, he found his father seriously ill, though not yet reduced to extremity; they tenderly embraced each other, though the pleasure of the meeting was of course materially impaired by the painful circumstances which had mainly given rise to it. Joseph immediately began to discharge the double office of an affectionate son and a zealous priest: he attended upon his father, assisted and consoled him; fortified him with the sacraments and other holy succours of the Church; doing everything to soothe and render happy his passage to the other life; such were the daily occupations of our saint, until at length Don Pietro peacefully expired in the arms of his beloved son; experiencing the same blessing as the patriarch Jacob, to whom

for his consolation God heretofore promised, "Thy son Joseph shall with his own hands close thine eyes in death." Moreover, he had the virtuous courage personally to assist at his father's obsequies, thus silencing nature by the dictates of religion and piety. Being left alone, he soon changed his paternal home into a hermitage, which he sanctified by his contemplations, vigils, austerities, and inflamed acts of the love of God. He never went out unless to celebrate the holy mysteries, or discharge other functions of his ministry; such as hearing confessions, preaching the word of God, instructing the poor, or dispensing abundant alms; for he styled himself only the administrator, not the proprietor of his patrimonial revenues: in a word, he found out the admirable secret of combining the exercises of the active, with the advantages of the contemplative life.

But it was not the will of God that he should long enjoy the sweets of repose. D. Andrea Capilia, Bishop of Urgelle, drew him forth, to his own great joy and satisfaction: he prevailed on him to accept some ecclesiastical benefices, and constituted him Judge, Visitor, and Vicar-general of Trempe and its district, comprising seventy-two parish churches, and three hundred others, dispersed through the villages and small towns; all of which were subject to the spiritual and temporal jurisdiction of the said bishop. Calasancius humbly and promptly obeyed his prelate, and with much anxiety set out for Trempe, resolved to act the part of a father rather than

that of judge. The quantity and variety of business to be transacted, scarcely left the man of God a moment of repose; so much was there to reform both in the clergy and in the people. Affability, sweetness, prayer, and example were the arms he everywhere made use of for the destruction of abuses: he never employed authority and rigour, unless he had to humble the pride of some unruly spirit. To withdraw the priests from their habit of gambling, he used to invite them to join him in certain innocent diversions, when by way of penalty the losers had to perform some act of Christian virtue. One day he did not disdain dismounting to assist a poor country-man in extricating his pack-horse out of a bog, after he had been long labouring at it in vain amidst oaths and imprecations; and he had the satisfaction of giving the man a correction with good effect. On another occasion when he was on the sea-shore, he took hold of a thick rope and assisted some men who were striving unsuccessfully to haul up a boat: nothing is vile, nothing is distasteful to charity.

The Bishop of Urgelle perceiving the beneficial effects produced in Trempe, by the learning and piety of Calasanctius, resolved to employ his zeal and ability in another more difficult undertaking, but which was of the utmost importance to the well-being of the diocese, which comprises a considerable portion of the Pyrenees; and in that part of his diocese, Christianity was all but obliterated. The people were ferocious, uncultivated, and filthy in their



habits ; and amongst the mountains and forests, education, so far from civilizing them, seemed only to render them more malicious and inhuman ; they were quick and acute in knavery, furious in vengeance, and unbridled in licentiousness. Religion being either unknown or neglected, offered no curb to the violent transports of their natural character ; it was necessary, therefore, to make them men, before they could be made Christians. If such was the corruption of the people, still more deplorable was the condition of the clergy, whose character was a compound of two fearful stains, horrible to contemplate in connexion with Holy Orders ; namely, ignorance and avarice ; the latter engaged them in simony and traffic, whilst the former kept them blind as to the real nature of their duties. Negligent in approaching the holy sacraments, they were still more so in administering them. The churches were mean and desolate, the people were deprived of the bread of Holy Scripture, and the dying were left without assistance in their last awful passage. Reproofs and remonstrances had been many and powerful, but were unheeded by these priests. Pastors, whose duty it was to root out vice, abounded in scandals, and authorized them by their example. Their houses, especially on festivals, were but sinks of gambling and debauchery, with an indiscriminate mixture of age and sex ; so that licentiousness was without bounds or limit. In vain did the bishops oppose canons and edicts to all these disorders ; the clergy despised both the

law and the law-givers, and abandoned themselves to whatever wickedness their passions excited. Such were the wounds Calasanctius was commissioned to heal.

He came, and saw, and wept over the miserable beings who were thus abandoned to a reprobate sense. He thought, and with reason, that he must begin to work by appeasing the anger, and imploring the mercy of that hand which mortifies and vivifies—which softens and which hardens. His tears, his prayers, his fasts, his flagellations were the victims with which he sought to appease the Almighty and render Him propitious: after this, he began his visitation, which cost him immense pain, toil, and dangers. His life was attempted on several occasions, but God always preserved him from the blow of the assassin. Throughout the vast extent of this irregular country, he left not a single village, however remote; he left not a single holy place without personally visiting it, in spite of the inclemency of the season, and the badness of the roads. He everywhere displayed the most remarkable prudence. He summoned the most ancient among the clergy to private conferences with him, because he generally found that in them reason was seduced by habitual false maxims, instead of their being carried away by the impetuosity of passion. He instructed and convinced them; he gained them to his heart and to his way of thinking: then, taking them with him as his companions, he went forth to undertake the grand reform: sometimes he admonished as a father, sometimes he

corrected as a judge, sometimes he instructed as a master; and everywhere left suitable decrees, and wise and christian regulations. The unexpected appearance of such proselytes everywhere led to great results. That doctrine was easily accepted as true, which was authenticated by their lips, re-echoed, as it was, from the voice of Calasanctius; the people admired and venerated in him those virtues of which they were become the imitators, who, a short time before, had been the protectors and promoters of vice. The Saint at length had the consolation of seeing new customs, and a new heart spring up amongst these people. He introduced the frequentation of the sacraments, due succours to the dying, catechetical instruction, and preaching the word of God. Every one now admitted and respected the orders of the prelate, which hitherto had been unheeded and derided. Having concluded his visitation, and given an account of it to his Bishop, he returned to his vicariate at Trempe.

Monsignor Capilia, blessing God for the abundant fruits arising from the zeal and solicitude of Calasanctius, appointed him [vicar-general of the whole diocese, in order that all might be benefited thereby. He was then only thirty-four years of age, but accepted the charge with his usual humility and submission; and being ever equal to himself, he diligently applied himself to the removal of abuses, repairing disorders, forming decrees, and promoting divine worship. In the brief space of a year, the diocese of Urgelle became the admiration of Spain; and its prelate,

through the efforts of his vicar, became the object of universal praise.

In consequence of the high reputation which he had acquired, the king charged him with a very difficult undertaking. A young cavalier of Barcelona had carried off a noble young lady ; the relatives of the latter vowed vengeance, and loudly demanded satisfaction for the affront, from the parents of the young man: the false laws of an ill-understood honour required that those connected with the young man should defend an offence which all parties disapproved of in their hearts. The consequence was, that the friends, relatives, and dependants of both families took up arms, and two furious factions were formed, resolutely and wickedly bent, the one on avenging, the other on justifying a fault springing from an ardent and ill-regulated passion.

The king charged the Bishop of Urgelle to lose no time in appeasing so disgraceful a tumult ; and to prevent all bloodshed and slaughter, he immediately despatched his vicar-general, who proved himself equal to the task : he triumphed over both parties, and restored perfect peace in the space of a few days, contrary to all human appearances, and to the great astonishment of the court, the whole city, and most of all, to the surprise of the contending parties themselves. Calasactius had beforehand formed his plans between God and himself, and thus insuring success, he gained consent of the two families, notwithstanding the mutual irritation of feeling : enmity was laid aside together with

their arms; and the injury of the abduction was repaired by the solemn celebration of Christian nuptials. Joseph was the only one who felt disturbed after this wonderful restoration of peace: the encomiums and applause which he received deeply pained his humility; so to avoid this torture, he immediately returned to Urgelle, where he never would allow the subject to be mentioned in his presence; lest, as he said, any part of a work which belonged wholly to God, might unjustly be ascribed to him.

It was not so easy, however, to impose silence on every tongue; people would comment on his virtues and merit, predicting future honours and rewards, as being undoubtedly in store for him. These commendations and predictions only tended to confirm the saint in a previously formed notion of quitting Spain; for some months past he had heard a voice whispering to him, in his heart, "Go to Rome, go to Rome." This voice had chiefly made itself heard in moments of his most fervent prayer, or when, as usual, he was severely chastising his body; moreover, he was favoured with a vision which strongly confirmed him in his purpose. It seemed to him that he was in Rome, surrounded by a vast multitude of children, whom he was instructing in literature and piety; many angels were with him as his companions in this ministry. He had several consultations with his director upon the subject, and being at length assured that such really was the Divine Will, he determined to repair at once to the metropolis of the Christian world.

He renounced his office of vicar-general, and all his ecclesiastical benefices, to the inexpressible regret and surprise of his prelate. By his advice he retained an annuity of two thousand crowns, the better to enable him to carry out the Divine designs when made known to him; for the same purpose he also reserved a suitable sum to be paid annually out of the revenues of his family estates; he divided all the rest between his sisters and the poor; he did still more, for not content with establishing, almost at his own expense, an institution for savings, and a confraternity which should annually portion off a certain number of young girls at Urgelle, he likewise established another institution for savings at Petralta, endowing it with his ecclesiastical revenues there, of which as yet he had never touched a farthing; in addition to this, he provided for the distribution twice a year, of a certain amount of corn and money amongst the poor. He provided for a similar distribution of corn in two other places, namely, Orteneda and Claverol, assigning an annual pension for this purpose. Having thus arranged his affairs, he repaired to Barcelona, but privately, to avoid all welcome and acclamation; and at the beginning of the year 1592, he set sail for Italy.

## CHAPTER V.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SAINT DURING THE FIRST FIVE  
YEARS OF HIS RESIDENCE IN ROME.

JOSEPH reached Civita Vecchia after a somewhat stormy passage: he remained there some few days, chiefly employed in thanking God for having brought him safe and sound to port. He then assumed a pilgrim's garb, and set out on foot for Rome; he arrived there during Lent, and proceeded at once to St. Peter's church, where with great fervour he made his profession of faith before the tomb of that glorious apostle, and where he remained for some hours in profound contemplation. He had certainly reached Rome before the 4th of April, on which day Pope Clement VIII. who had been raised to the pontificate on the preceding 30th of January, went to take possession in the usual manner, of the Lateran Basilica. The magnificence of this spectacle, which attracts even strangers from distant countries, excited no curiosity in the soul of Joseph, nor did it at all distract his mind from devout contemplation. To him, who is intent on the grandeurs of heaven, all worldly pomp must appear mean and contemptible. The better to propitiate the Almighty, and obtain the manifestation of the Divine will, (which was the real motive of his journey to Rome,) he immediately began the visit of the Seven Churches, with such consolation to himself, that he re-

solved to visit them every day, until he should have ascertained the will of God in his regard.

Joseph's arrival in Rome had been preceded by letters from the Bishop of Urgelle to his agent there, Don Baltazar Compte, a canon of Taragon. The affectionate prelate dilated in these letters on the merits of Calasanctius, and warmly recommended him to the attentions of the Canon. It so happened that just at this time the famous Marco Antonio Colonna, Archbishop of Taranto, who, having assisted at the Council of Trent, was afterwards created Cardinal by Pius IV., and Bishop of Palestrina by Sixtus V., was in need of the services of a theologian. He consulted Compte, who was his confidant and resided with him in his palace, requesting him to seek out some competent person for this important office. The Canon, by way of answer, placed in the Cardinal's hands the letters he had received from the Bishop of Urgelle, and gave him to understand that the sort of person he required, qualified alike by birth, sanctity, and learning, would probably arrive at Rome within a short space of time. He moreover added, that he had prepared a lodging for him in his own apartments, and had been watching his arrival for some days; and that should he purpose making any lengthened stay in the eternal city, he scarcely thought his eminence would find a more suitable person, or one more likely to realize his wishes. The Cardinal desired Compte to be on the look out for Calasanctius, to show him every courtesy on his arrival, and to introduce him at



the Colonna palace without delay. For some weeks the canon continued his search in vain, but at length discovered him, buried, as it were, in his humility, and invited him to the lodging prepared for him. The holy man scarcely knew how to refuse this unexpected civility, and could not do otherwise than accompany Compte to the palace, where he was presented to the Cardinal, and received with every demonstration of affection and esteem. By desire of his Eminence, several persons undertook to fathom the disposition, the acquirements, and the abilities of his new guest; finding him to be precisely such as the Bishop of Urgelle had represented, he requested his attendance one day, and confidentially questioned him upon the purport of his journey to Rome; with full sincerity Joseph answered, "I came to Rome to do the will of God." "The will of God," rejoined the Cardinal, "is that you should dwell in my house, where you may practise whatever exercises of piety you please. You shall be my theologian, and have no further trouble than to let me consult you upon the various causes brought before those congregations of which I am a member." To these words of the venerable old Cardinal, Joseph humbly replied, "If such be the will of God, let it be done." He was much comforted when his Eminence told him that he had provided him with a lodging which would be quite in accordance with his taste, namely, some apartments adjoining the church of the holy apostles, where he would have every facility for

gratifying his devotion. This favour was accompanied by another office which the Cardinal wished him to undertake, and which the servant of God looked upon as a new favour; this was the spiritual instruction and direction of his great-nephew, Prince Filippo Colonna, who for this purpose was regularly conducted to the apartments of Calas Sanctius every day; nor would his highness ever quit the house without going to ask and receive the holy man's blessing; he was accustomed to call him, "My Father Joseph," and this was the first time the saint heard himself called father by the innocent lips of childhood. As Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, his former friend and companion at Alcala, was absent from Rome, Joseph was unable to pay his respects to him; but, on the return of his eminence, great was their mutual joy at meeting again; and the young Cardinal was highly gratified to find his friend, whom he held to be a saint, regularly installed in his palace.

One of the first concerns of Calas Sanctius was to draw up fixed rules for the useful employment of every hour of the day. Towards midnight he arose from his brief and uneasy rest, and began his long series of pious exercises, which were not interrupted till about the middle of the day, when he allowed himself a short respite, and took his scanty meal, generally consisting of a little bread and water. By way of relief after the fatigues of the day, he inflicted a sanguinary discipline upon his wearied frame:

moreover, he had provided himself with a rough hair-shirt, and with an iron plate, something in the nature of a rasp, and armed with sharp points; with which, even to the last stage of decrepitude, he continually tortured his body. I need not attempt minutely to describe either the order or the variety of his pious practices; merely to give a hint of them will suffice for the edification of the Christian reader; whilst upon this subject, I will only add, that so surprising and saintly a mode of life could not have been endured by human weakness, unless supported by a more than ordinary share of grace.

After some time, Joseph undertook another charge highly gratifying to himself. The whole establishment of the Colonna family entreated him, through the interposition and authority of the cardinal, to instruct them in the mysteries of religion, and in the moral precepts. To this pious request, the servant of God most willingly condescended; and fixed an hour, convenient to them all, when they were regularly to meet every Saturday, in the sacristy of the Church of the Apostles: this circumstance brought under his notice, a confraternity which had been established there by Pope Pius IV. under the title of the Holy Apostles. The society was composed of a determinate number of ecclesiastics and seculars, distinguished for their piety and respectability. Some of them bear the name of visitors, and are distributed through the different parishes of Rome: each one, in his own district, is commissioned to seek out the bashful poor, the sick, and

other sufferers in their own houses ; and to assist them with advice, with alms, and all other suitable succour. This same association still flourishes at Rome to the inestimable benefit of the afflicted. Joseph immediately requested to be enrolled amongst them ; not only was he gratified in this respect, but was at once elected visitor. From that day his charity began to shine forth ; besides distributing the alms arising from the society itself, he found therein a new and secret mode of disposing of the ecclesiastical revenues, and the annual pension derived from his patrimonial estate : which, as we have already stated, he retained for himself, in deference to the advice of the Bishop of Urgelle. Not content with the limits of his own district, he went into other districts, but never without the consent of their respective visitors.

In the meantime, the decorum and Christian conduct of the members forming the household of the Colonna family, attracted the attention of all Rome : it was spoken of in many places, in terms of high admiration ; for it but too often happens that audacity and incivility reign among the domestics of the noble ; screened as they deem themselves, by the protection of a respectable livery. Cardinal Alexandro de Medici offered his congratulations on the subject, to Cardinal Marco Antonio Colonna, who informed him that these beneficial results were entirely owing to the indefatigable efforts of his theologian. This raised in the mind of his friend, an ardent wish to become acquainted with the servant of God ; and

no sooner had he attained his object, than he offered to enroll him a member of "the Congregation of the Christian Doctrine," of which Cardinal de Medici was the protector. The object of this institute is to teach children and adults the Christian doctrine; devoting all festival days to this purpose. We may imagine with what joy and promptitude Calasanctius embraced a labour, tending so materially to the glory of God and the good of his neighbour. When once he was aggregated to it, he did not confine himself either to the usual churches, or to the festival days: he took every day, and went through the streets and squares; and wherever he met with poor children, mechanics or peasants, idling away their time, he used to instruct them in faith and morals, and hear their confessions with as much advantage to them, as fatigue to himself. He devoted himself most especially to rogues, to the licentious and debauched, in order to reduce them to the way of salvation; and we read in the processes for the examination of his virtues, that "it was quite enough to fall into his hands: this of itself was a certain pledge of conversion." Moved by his fervent apostleship, the brethren of the Congregation unanimously elected him their president, when he had only been a few months amongst them, whilst he was as yet only a novice, whilst he was still a stranger, and, as it were, almost unknown at Rome. The exalted virtues which everywhere accompanied him, superseded the rights of citizenship; and merit supplied the deficiency of years. Professing as he did, a spe-

cial devotion towards the seraphical Patriarch Saint Francis, he often attended the confraternity of the Stigmata, at that time existing in Rome, and he was a bright example to that numerous brotherhood: he determined, moreover, to visit the sacred remains of the Saint at Assisi; and took advantage of the pardon or plenary indulgence to be obtained in the church of the Madonna of the Angels, situated near that city. Declining the courteous offers of Cardinal Marco Antonio for the convenience of his journey, he set out in true pilgrim style, with no other provisions than humility and his love of suffering. Dressed in the sack-cloth robe of the confraternity of the Stigmata, girded with a thick rope, and bare-footed, he started towards the end of July, and reached Assisi in three days. Whilst absorbed in profound contemplation before the saint's tomb, he was favoured with a heavenly vision, in which St. Francis appeared to him, and in familiar conversation with him, taught him how he might worthily gain the indulgence. Joseph returned to Rome full of spiritual consolation, and fully resolved to return to Assisi the following year.

But all the desires of his devotion were calmed or rather overpowered by the ardour of his charity. In the summer of 1595, Rome was devastated by an infectious disease, so malignant as not to be distinguished from the plague: death reaped a rich harvest of human lives; few were the houses that did not either pay him tribute, or prepare to do so: the whole city was overwhelmed

with terror, desolation, and misery, and especially the poor, for as the hospitals were soon completely filled, they were unprovided with remedies or other succours. This public calamity excited the heart of Joseph to deep compassion; whilst he devoted both mind and body to labour. He immediately sacrificed all the delights of peaceful contemplation; all but renounced both sleep and food, barely allowing himself sufficient to prevent starvation, and enable him to persevere in active charity. From the hospitals, he passed to the houses of the poor, and to the huts and stables where poor miserable objects were crowded in sad confusion, abandoned to their sufferings. With the assistance of a ladder, the man of God was to be seen climbing in at the windows, when, as but too often happened, there was no person within sufficiently in health to crawl and open the door. He conveyed restoratives to them all, being accompanied for this purpose, by a serving man and a hired horse, well laden with all necessaries: he performed the most menial and repulsive offices for these poor creatures; administered the sacraments to those who were in danger, assisted the agonizing, prayed for the dead, and buried their bodies. Certainly it was owing to no precaution on his part, but to the goodness of God alone, that he escaped this fearful contagion, to which his charity so incessantly exposed him. There were at that time in Rome two noble souls, animated by one and the same spirit; united in the strictest bands of friendship, and generously sacrificing

themselves for the succour of the afflicted ; these were, Saint Camillus of Lellis, and our Saint : their pure, disinterested charity afforded a lively and visible proof of the divinity of the Catholic religion which they professed.

On the cessation of the fearful epidemic, Joseph resumed his ordinary mode of life. One night, whilst he was engaged in profound contemplation, he was overpowered by a light slumber, the natural consequence of his exhausted state. In the course of this slumber God favoured him with a vision, in which three young damsels of superhuman beauty appeared before him : the foremost of them loosened her robe, weeping and lamenting that she was driven out and abandoned by every body : Joseph compassionated her, declaring himself ready to assist her, and that he would never forsake her : it then seemed to him that he arose, stretched forth his arms towards her, and raised her from the ground. At this moment he returned to his natural state ; and ashamed of having applied his arms to such a purpose, the dream or vision caused him considerable anxiety. The following day, on which were commemorated the Stigmata of Saint Francis, he spent a long time in prayer in the church of that very pious confraternity, at an hour when the greater concourse of persons had dispersed : whilst he was thus engaged, he perceived a young female moving about in the church ; in every respect—appearance, dress, and lamentation—similar to the one he had seen the night before in his



dream. In astonishment at the sight, he asked her who she was: "I am Poverty," said she, "and am driven away by every body." Joseph instantly took his cloak off his own shoulders, and offered it to her, that she might cover herself with it; but whilst he was in the act of doing so, the maiden disappeared. On resuming his prayer, a celestial light gave him to understand that the three virgins who had visited him the preceding night, were Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience; whereupon all his fears and anxiety vanished.

In the following year, 1597, some of the Discalced Carmelite Friars, called Teresians, men remarkable for the sanctity of their lives, went from Spain to Rome, there to establish a monastery of their exemplary institute. Calasancius soon contracted a close friendship with them, and his influence with Cardinal Marco Antonio and other persons, was of essential service to them; through his representations the church of the Madonna della Scala in Trastevere was made over to them; he also promoted their foundations in other parts of Italy, as they themselves declared with sentiments of deep gratitude. Soon after this, Joseph experienced a heavy trial in the loss of his venerated friend the cardinal, who died at Zagarola, one of his country-seats, on the 13th of May, 1597. Grief was the only inconvenience arising to the servant of God from this loss; for Cardinal Ascanio courteously insisted on his retaining his apartments in the Colonna Palace, and requested him to continue

in his office of theologian to himself, as well as spiritual director of the young Prince Filippo and the whole family.

Towards the end of July, the saint again repeated his pilgrimage to Assisi, in the same manner as he had done the year before. One day whilst he was in prayer there, the seraphical Patriarch appeared to him, accompanied by three beautiful young damsels, splendidly attired; at this sight Joseph was filled with reverential fear, but St. Francis encouraged him, saying, "These are Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and I am come to espouse them to thee." He then drew three magnificent rings from his bosom, and commanded him to espouse them. Joseph promptly obeyed, and no sooner were these mysterious espousals accomplished than he was rapt in a long and profound ecstasy, on recovering from which he found his heart overflowing with celestial delights. After returning grateful thanks to the Almighty, and to St. Francis, he joyfully set out on his return to Rome.

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## CHAPTER VI.

ENDEAVOURS OF THE SAINT TO PROVIDE FOR THE  
EDUCATION OF POOR CHILDREN. ORIGIN OF THE  
PIOUS SCHOOLS.

SUCH frequent and splendid benefits which God conferred on Calasanctius, seemed to him as so many voices calling upon him to undertake at

once the accomplishment of the divine designs in his regard ; this heavenly discourse, however, was too vague for our humble and timorous interpreter to venture upon any positive decision ; he did not believe that he possessed sufficient spiritual wisdom to solve divine enigmas. To impetrate a clearer manifestation from the same mouth, he had recourse to corporal austerities, heartfelt sighs, and incessant prayer, often repeating the words of Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth!" In the meantime, his heart was daily more and more penetrated with grief at seeing poor young children so miserably deprived of Christian education and instruction ; together with an ardent desire to benefit them, by securing them instruction in the mysteries of faith, and in the moral precepts.

Being, as we have already said, visitor of the confraternity of the Holy Apostles, and a zealous labourer of the confraternity of the Christian Doctrine, he had full opportunity of observing the immense numbers of the poor, and of understanding the consequences of their miserable condition. To their poverty he attributed, in great part, the ignorance and roughness of the people ; ill trained as they were in early life : such a disorder is as disastrous as it is real. The parents, occupied in obtaining food and necessaries for their families, cannot possibly undertake the charge of their education ; and not unfrequently surpass their children in their ignorance of every Christian duty ; consequently these poor little innocents are abandoned to the resources of their

own counsels ; that is to say, of their own blindness, and the corrupt inclinations of nature. Misery leads them into the public streets, to idleness, and to dens of infamy ; so that their first principles are acquired in the worst schools of vice : nor have they any one to instil piety in their tender minds, since the miserable beings who ought to pour it into their bosoms, possess not those means so efficacious with children, namely, authority and affection. Poverty itself seems to make their souls less precious in the eyes of the world ; whilst even evangelical labourers care not to cultivate piety, when to do so they find but a wretched object in tattered garments. In the meantime, the evil seed of vice germinates in Christian cities ; and whilst the tribunals of justice promulgate severe penalties upon the disorders which infest society, myriads of criminals rise up with impunity within their very walls. Joseph fully appreciated the paternal endeavours of the parish-priests for the instruction of their respective flocks ; but he likewise knew that these instructions were too brief and transitory to be of essential benefit to children ; who, amidst the dissipation of ferial days, easily forget the instructions imparted to them on the festivals.

He was convinced that daily culture would be necessary, if solid maxims of piety were to be imprinted in their mind ; nor did he think this could be done otherwise than by means of gratuitous schools, in which the masters should be able and willing to couple Christian with literary instruction. To this object then did

Joseph direct all his care and thoughts. He addressed himself in the first place to the different parish school-masters who were paid by the Roman Senate; he entreated them to undertake the charitable office of admitting gratuitously into their schools, such poor children belonging to their respective parishes, as were unable to pay the required stipend; they all declined loading themselves with an additional burthen, unless they received an increase of salary. Joseph next had recourse to the senate, earnestly beseeching them either to increase the payment of the masters, or to open additional schools, which would tend not only to the benefit of the poor, but to the advantage of the Christian republic, insisting much on the salutary consequences which would result from so desirable an arrangement. Calas Sanctius was respectfully received and listened to by the senate, and due praise was given to his zeal, but no assistance could be promised, owing to the heavy burthens already weighing upon the public treasury. All this did not discourage the man of God, who resolved to make an attempt upon the fathers of the Society of Jesus, whose charity is ever most exemplarily employed in promoting the spiritual welfare of their neighbour. He appealed to the rector of the Roman college, and to the far-famed Father Claudia Acquaviva, then general of the order, beseeching them to add to their schools another for young beginners belonging entirely to the lower classes, and thus render still more abundant the rich fruits

garnered up in the store-house of the Church by the illustrious sons of St. Ignatius. These two fathers both regretted being unable to accede to the wishes of Calasanctius, informing him that it was a law of the Roman college, confirmed by apostolical authority, that no youths should be admitted to those schools who had not beforehand acquired the rudiments of grammar. As a last resource, he applied to his intimate friend the curate of the Minerva, to ascertain what hope there might be of his Dominicans undertaking this work of mercy. He was answered that such a thing was utterly impracticable; seeing that his religious were fully occupied in their regular duties of choir, professorships, preaching, giving missions, hearing confessions, and other employments in the service of the Church; however, as the good curate was a great servant of God, and well understood the advantages of the project, he exhorted Joseph to join with him in prayer, that our Lord might deign to manifest to them who it was that His providence designed to carry out so important an undertaking; and they often repeated together the prayer made by the apostles on a different occasion, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all, show us whom Thou dost elect."

Almighty God thus permitted all his attempts to prove unsuccessful, that he might at last be convinced that he himself was the person selected for this grand enterprise, and soon afterwards was pleased to make this manifest in a

very clear manner. As Joseph was one day crossing a certain square, he suddenly came amongst a troop of young children, whose scurrilous expressions plainly told him how depraved and immodest they must be in conduct. Being always accustomed to walk about the streets with his eyes cast down upon the ground, and his thoughts raised to heaven, he did not notice the obscene group, until he distinctly heard a voice say to him, "Look, Joseph, look!" He stopped, cast a glance around, saw, and was moved to most tender compassion. Whilst still in this state, the words of the Holy Ghost resounded in his heart, "To thee the poor is confided: thou shalt assist the orphan." Then did he begin to comprehend that it was to himself that our Lord intended to confide the charge of the poor: at the same moment the vision he had formerly had at Urgelle reverted to his mind; in it, he seemed to be in Rome in the act of instructing children. Moreover, he likewise recollected the visions of the preceding year, in the first of which he had clasped in his arms, and in the second, had clothed Poverty. However, for still greater certainty, he continued to consult Almighty God in prayer, and sought the advice of his directors and other friends of distinguished virtue and discernment, especially one of his associates in the confraternity of the Holy Apostles, a nobleman named Giacomo d' Avila, and the venerable Father Giovanni di Gesu e Maria, a Discalced Carmelite. God, by his inspirations, and His servants by

their advice, fully ratified the oracle addressed to him, "To thee is confided the poor: thou shalt assist the orphan."

After thanking the Almighty for deigning thus to manifest His will to him, he at once determined to put his hand to the work.

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## BOOK II.

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### CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS. INUNDATION OF THE  
TIBER. JOSEPH'S CHARITY AND OTHER GOOD WORKS.

As soon as Joseph was convinced of the designs of Divine Providence, he directed all his thoughts to their fulfilment. Being well acquainted with the various districts of Rome, of which his quality of visitor of the confraternity of the Holy Apostles had enabled him to form a pretty correct judgment, he felt satisfied that the parish of Trastevere was the most in need of schools and instruction, as being more densely populated, and chiefly by the poor. Antonio Brendani, the parish-priest of St. Dorotea, was a venerable old man, overflowing with charity: as soon as Calas Sanctius informed him of his project, not only did he offer the use of two apartments, but volunteered his services, to be his companion in so merito-



rious a work. Two other priests, members of the Christian Doctrine, also offered to assist Joseph, who could not possibly undertake to teach all. A work, appointed by Providence, cannot surely be brought to a stand-still for want of means. Towards the end of autumn, 1597, Calasanctius and his three companions opened public schools at the Saint Dorotea, with full approbation and the high encomiums of the Sovereign Pontiff, Clement VIII. It is worthy of remark, that precisely in this same spot S. Gaetano Tiene, with his three companions, laid the foundation of his illustrious order, the Clerks Regular. Joseph named his work "the Pious Schools," that its very title might at once explain the nature of the institute; namely, gratuitous instruction in piety and literature. By the end of the first week the scholars amounted to somewhat more than a hundred; they were instructed in reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic; Joseph's charity providing them with books, maps, pens, and copy-books; besides the occasional gratification of some little presents. Thus did he devote his own income to the poverty of others. The regulations which were introduced were well calculated for the attainment of his object: literary instruction was daily mingled with Christian instruction; and piety soon began to insinuate itself in the minds of these young children. To speak of God and the eternal truths, was no longer a foreign unknown language to them; and vice now began to assume its real aspect of deformity in their sight. Amongst the youths who first began to frequent the new

schools, there was one named Agostino Oregio, a native of S. Sofia, a small town between Tuscany and Emilia. Mind and talent rendered him far superior to his mean extraction: under the discipline of Calas Sanctius, he was solidly grounded in good principles and in grammar; after which he passed elsewhere, to study the other ordinary branches of education; in due time, he was promoted to the cardinalate by Pope Urban VIII. and was the first man of celebrity which the Pious Schools gave to the Church.

By degrees the ecclesiastical companions of our Saint (with the exception of Brendani) began to grow weary of their tedious task, and though with civility, yet suddenly abandoned it. Calas Sanctius relying on the word, "To thee is confided the poor," was not dismayed at this unexpected desertion. To supply the place of charity in the instruction of his children, he called in the aid of justice; offering handsome salaries to those who would assist him in the work. In Rome there is no scarcity of needy, yet talented and well-conducted priests, who, when employed, usually discharge their duties well; so long at least, as the remembrance of their former penury endures: when that becomes extinct, their industry is apt to slacken; but Joseph hoped, that before this should have taken place, God would provide some willing gratuitous workmen, to supersede the mercenaries; and that thus charity would resume her post. The Pious Schools advanced in credit and in the number of their scholars: twice in the course of the year 1598 it was found

necessary to seek extra masters and more ample space ; and this of course increased the expenso both of rent and salaries. But we must not omit to mention, that in the midst of all these cares and labours, Joseph still continued to practise his usual exercises of piety, and the duties annexed to the two confraternities of which he was a member ; namely, that of the Holy Apostles, and that of the Christian Doctrine. In the registry belonging to the former, we find his name as visitor, for the years 1597—98, and 99.

Towards the end of the year 1598, one sole object seemed to engross the charity of Joseph. On the 24th of December the Tiber overflowed its banks most alarmingly, and occasioned a terrible inundation in and around Rome : the waters covered a considerable part of the city : rushing onwards with such impetuosity as to shake and injure many of the houses ; whilst others were completely overturned and swallowed up together with their inmates. In the lower districts nothing was to be seen but misery, struggles, and horror. The water rushed into the beds of such poor creatures as inhabited the lower parts of the houses, forcing its passage through the windows, and bearing along with it the furniture, and even the bodies of the drowned. In the more open spaces all was destruction and confusion. Those who had saved their lives by flight, had to deplore the loss of all their property. Some had sought an asylum on the roofs of their houses, where they had nothing to look for but famine ; the water having

cut off all communication with provision stores, and even with their fellow creatures. In the balconies and on the tops of houses, men, women, and children had fled for safety; and might be seen with outstretched arms, calling aloud for succour. The efforts and anxiety of Joseph were not spared on this melancholy occasion: the governor of the city did his duty nobly; but the charity of the former was all the more active, as the motive which gave it birth was of all others the most elevated. He courageously plunged into the waters, wading through them with much fatigue and danger, and as he was very tall he was able to rescue drowning creatures, to drag out the dead bodies, to secure for them the benefit of Christian burial, or to open a passage and give vent to the stagnant water: at other times, he procured a boat, and allowing himself no respite, he went backwards and forwards to convey provisions to those who were so cruelly imprisoned, and to deliver those who were the least secure, though at his own great risk: everywhere was he to be seen at work: he seemed to be unwearied, and unwearable. The damages arising from the awful flood, besides the immense sacrifice of human life, were calculated at more than a million of Roman scudi. However dreadful must be the remembrance of this inundation, the people ought still to bless the Lord for having mitigated the chastisement, by means of the surprising charity of St. Joseph Calasanctius.

The veneration and increasing esteem of the Romans, who pointed him out to one another

when they saw him in the street, tended to increase his labours. On re-opening the schools, they were more numerous crowded than before; but God at the same time provided him with additional help, some brethren of the Christian Doctrine offering to share his labours: in order to consolidate the pious work, he induced the members of that confraternity to protect and encourage the schools. In the general congregation, held on the 1st of August, 1599, a proposal was made to this effect, and was unanimously agreed to. During this same year, he was enrolled a member of the confraternity of the Stigmata, at the suggestion of the brethren themselves; however, he declined being aggregated to that of the SS. Trinita de' Pellegrini, and that of S. Maria del Suffragio; for although he assiduously complied with the conditions of all these charitable confraternities, he was unwilling to impose this upon himself as an obligation, lest it might so happen that he should be unable to comply therewith. In truth, it was a matter of surprise to all who knew him intimately, how he could possibly acquit himself of so many various (and apparently opposing) occupations: for instance, the daily visit to the Seven Churches, to the hospitals and prisons, frequent catechising in the schools on all ferial days, the spiritual direction of the young prince, Filippo Colonna, the instruction of that family, the exercises of five confraternities, holy mass, the canonical office, that of our Blessed Lady, with many other prayers; long meditations and long lectures, besides many

other extra occupations. In the Process on the virtues of the servant of God, Monsignor Bottini, Promoter of the Faith, raised an important difficulty as to the probability of his having been able to attend to so many duties at the same time; but there were so many splendid proofs of the truth of it, that the objection was most triumphantly refuted; the honour of our Saint has even been increased by the very proposal and solving of so intricate a point. We may perhaps without injustice, compare Joseph to that great hero mentioned in Holy Scripture, "Day and night he was inflamed with charity, and sleep was banished from his eyes."

It was in the year 1599 that he had occasion to visit the Spanish Ambassador and the Datario, to thank the former for having obtained, and the latter for having conferred on him, a rich canonry of Seville, which, however, he renounced, as he had also the previous year refused a bishopric, which his Catholic Majesty had generously offered him. He spent the autumnal vacation in a pious pilgrimage to Assisi, Alvernia, Camaldoli, Lorretto, Monte Cassino, and some other sanctuaries of Italy. Although his journey was accomplished on foot, he contrived to visit all these places, because he never allowed curiosity to cheat devotion of a single moment of his time.

## CHAPTER II.

TRANSLATION OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS. HIS REGULATIONS FOR THEM. HIS ILLNESS, AND HIS CONSOLATION.

At the beginning of the new scholastic year, Joseph re-opened his schools; but the great increase of pupils, together with the death of the worthy parish priest of St. Dorotea, Antonio Brendani, induced him to transfer the schools to more spacious apartments, in a locality better suited to the convenience of those children residing beyond the Tiber. On this occasion he gave quite a new form to the schools. That he might be better able to assist in the work, he was anxious to fix his own residence in the same house as the schools, and he found the other masters wished to do so too. He proposed his opinion to Pope Clement VIII., who not only approved it, but even exhorted Calasanctius to form a congregation of ecclesiastics there, to serve the schools, of which he himself was to be the head and director. The saint humbly yielded to the words of the pontiff, and proceeded at once to Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, giving him an account of the whole affair, and requesting his permission to withdraw from his palace, in which he had resided eight years consecutively; he then took leave of Don Filippo and all the other members of that most excellent

family. He entered upon his new lodging in the beginning of the holy year 1600; having appointed the masters to their employments and respective habitations, and having introduced a sort of community-life, he was by them unanimously chosen to be their superior, under the title of "Prefect of the Pious Schools."

Whilst the addition both of masters and scholars increased his consolation, it also increased his labours and his expenses: his expenses were increased by additional rents, the maintenance of the masters, and larger purchases of books, maps, and other casual things which his charity undertook to provide for such of the children as were too poor to buy them for themselves. His labour was increased, not so much by teaching and other services which he undertook for the benefit of the children, the schools, and the masters, but in consequence of the custom which he then introduced of accompanying the scholars to their own homes. He feared lest the indiscriminate mixture of such a number of youths, just at the moment of quitting the school, might be injurious to some of them: he therefore divided them in various troops according to their respective districts, each troop being conducted in good order by one of the masters, who left each child at his own home, and proceeded thus through the streets until they were all safely lodged. This commendable practice is still observed in Rome and other cities of Italy by the religious of the "Pious Schools." His increase of consolation



was but the natural consequence of his increased labours and expenses. But as he was never satisfied with his own exertions, he would, on the 10th of July, be enrolled in the confraternity of the SS. Trinità dei Pellegrini, and this at the earnest solicitation of that most exemplary brotherhood. He daily attended most assiduously upon the poor pilgrims to whom he willingly rendered every sort of service. Moreover, he was commissioned by Cardinal Camillo Borghese, and Cardinal Sfrondati, to catechise a number of heretics, attracted to Rome by the solemnities of the holy year or jubilee, of whom about fifty abjured heresy in the month of July alone; this had been an object of great interest to the Pope, who had himself recommended it to the attention of the two above-mentioned cardinals.

On the 17th of the September following, Joseph aggregated himself to the Confraternity of S. Maria del Suffragio, in the institution of which he and Cardinal Baronius took an active part; hence they are numbered amongst the founders of that congregation; he also used his influence to procure one famous privilege for it of Clement VIII., namely, that of annually delivering from the hands of justice one criminal condemned to death.

During the years 1601 and 1602, the schools of Calasanctius continued to progress both in order and in public estimation. Again was he obliged to look elsewhere for more ample accommodation; a place that would be spacious

enough to receive seven hundred scholars, to contain a suitable oratory, and convenient apartments for the masters. The secretary of briefs, Monsignor Vestri, furnished the rent, giving for that purpose his palace, situated on the right-hand side of the church of S. Andrea della Valle, where the porter's lodge of the Theatine fathers now stands. For the more exact observance of regularity, Joseph purchased a small bell, and having got it duly blessed, he placed it in an elevated position in the court-yard; and from a motive of devotion fixed it with his own hands. A ladder was raised against the wall, he mounted to the place intended for the bell, but, alas! scarcely had he accomplished his task, when he tumbled from that height, and fell heavily upon the ground. The cause of the accident was never clearly ascertained; all that he could say about it was, that he suddenly felt himself violently shaken and pushed off the ladder; some of the surrounding spectators declared, that whilst he was fixing the bell, they saw a certain black shadow which seemed to take hold of him, and shake him very roughly. Perhaps our Lord would allow His just and innocent servant to be tried, and so abandoned him to the fury of the devil, as heretofore He had done with regard to Job, and with the same restriction: "See well, thou dost not take his life!" In effect, if we consider the height from whence he fell, together with his great weight and the utter helplessness with which he fell, nothing less than instantaneous death could

have been expected ; but God, who had called him to Rome for the benefit of such multitudes of young persons, permitted no more serious result from this alarming accident, than the fracture of a thigh and leg ; these, however, served to exercise his patience for the rest of his life. The sufferings which he had to endure during the few first days after his fall, were most excruciating ; whilst, at the same time, his patience and serenity of countenance, seemed little less than miraculous.

He, however, who destroys and who vivifies, deigned to reward the holy endurance of Calas Sanctius with His choicest consolations. Whilst the sick man was thus suffering for Jesus Christ, some worthy ecclesiastics visited him, and voluntarily offered themselves as workmen in his schools : the foremost of these was Tomaso Vittoria, a nobleman from Seville, and doctor of theology ; who hearing of the accident which had happened to his friend Calas Sanctius, hastened to him : in the course of the spiritual conversation which he held with the Saint, he suddenly felt himself pressed by an inward impulse to devote himself to the service of God in the instruction of youth. The second was Gasparo Dragonetti, a Sicilian, who although he had attained the great age of ninety-five, made himself the spiritual son of Calas Sanctius, and vigorously served the Pious Schools for the space of twenty-five years, dying in the odour of sanctity at the age of 120. In 1626, Pietro della Valle visited and conversed with the venerable old man, and mentions him in his

“Travels,” as a remarkable curiosity. The third of these priests was called Gellio Ghellini, a noble Venetian, a doctor of theology, and canon-penitentiary of the cathedral: steps have been taken towards the canonization of this great servant of God, and his Life has been written. Joseph gratefully thanked our Lord for these acquisitions, and more than ever admired the riches of the divine mercy.

As soon as he was able to leave his bed, with the assistance of a crutch, he wished to drag himself to the schools and resume his accustomed offices in behalf of his poor children. Charity, which is patient to suffer, is impatient to labour. His only motive of joy, when he found himself thus far recovered, arose from his being able to superintend the regularity of the schools, and reserve for himself the most irksome part of the toil. The rules which he had drawn up in writing, were to the following effect. The scholars were to be distributed in various classes; they were to learn reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and rhetoric: all was to begin by imploring the help of God in prayer; at the close of each half hour, a bell reminded every one to salute our Blessed Lady in the words of the angel, and the acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity were recited aloud: towards the end of the school-hour, each master was to instil some maxim of christian piety in the minds of his respective pupils: at the sign to break up, the litanies of our Blessed Lady were to be recited. On the Saturday evening, the father-prefect was to assemble all the

scholars in the oratory, and give them a moral discourse for the space of half an hour; after which the litanies were to be sung. On the mornings of festival days, they were all to repair to the oratory, and there sing the matins and lauds of our Lady's office: the younger children, in the meantime, reciting the rosary in another oratory; the whole to conclude with the adorable sacrifice of the mass.

After dinner on Sunday and some other days, the children were divided in classes according to their ages, and catechized; and once a month, on an appointed day, they all approached the Holy Eucharistic Banquet, excepting those who were too young; and they made their confession: moreover, Calasauctius introduced another custom, entitled "Continual Prayer." Some scholars from each class were sent in rotation to the oratory, there to kneel and pray for the prosperity of the church and principality, for the conversion of sinners, infidels, &c., as is distinctly expressed on boards placed just before the kneelers, so that they could not easily forget it. All these wise and excellent regulations have been perpetuated and held sacred in the Pious Schools. Joseph never spared himself: in addition to a great number of the poorest and roughest of the children, whom he always selected as his share to teach, he never dispensed himself from giving the moral discourses, catechisms, or from accompanying the children home from school. He spent a great part of the night in mending their pens, preparing writing-copies, and the

subjects of composition which the masters were to give the day following. Not content with this, he took upon himself the charge of sweeping the stairs and school rooms ; and cleaning other places which could not be otherwise than dusty, when frequented habitually by a troop of giddy children. In my opinion, the prayers, vigils, fasts, and bodily macerations of Calasanctius, lose much of their grandeur when contrasted with so much zeal, and such heroic humility. The fruit of all this work was evident and abundant. I must pass over many proofs of this, and content myself with relating only one. Once, as Monsignor Guidiccioni, Bishop of Lucca, was passing through a garden in Rome, he suddenly heard the feeble voice of a child utter these words, "Father! repeat the words that I am going to say—'O my God! I am sorry from the bottom of my heart for having offended Thee, because,'" &c., and with tender devotion the child went through the act of contrition: following the sound of the voice, the prelate hastened to the spot whence it proceeded, and found the gardener in one of the trees, hanging head downwards, in imminent danger of falling and breaking his neck ; his fall merely being arrested by two cross-branches which had caught the unfortunate man by the foot: beneath the tree stood a little boy, about eight or nine years old, whose countenance at once expressed both grief and courage ; he was the gardener's son. The attendants of the bishop soon released the poor man from his perilous position ; and then his Lordship turned

in astonishment to the child, and inquired where, and by whom he had been instructed: "At the Pious Schools," replied he, "where our masters teach us, that whenever we are in danger, we must always have recourse to God and make an act of contrition." This little incident much edified the bishop, who was delighted with the child, and with the Pious Schools; he frequently visited the latter during the remainder of his sojourn in Rome, for his own consolation and edification, as he himself declared.

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### CHAPTER III.

BENEFICENCE OF POPE CLEMENT VIII. PERSECUTIONS  
RAISED AGAINST JOSEPH.

UP to the year 1603, the Pious Schools went on prosperously: they were a cause of satisfaction to all those who sought the public welfare: they were frequently visited, and were highly eulogized by many illustrious personages. Clement VIII. warmly esteemed Joseph, and wishing to see him again, commissioned Monsignor Vestri to conduct him to his presence. He welcomed him with indescribable affection, and even with reverence. In the course of the long conversation with which he honoured Calas Sanctius, he said amongst other things, "Our merciful God has elected you for this work, a work which we have long desired. We purpose visiting your schools; in the meantime reflect whether there is

anything you stand in need of, and we will willingly grant it." The servant of God, who cared not for temporal advantages, had no worldly favours to solicit: he merely implored the protection and patronage of his Holiness in behalf of the Pious Schools, his blessing for himself, and then departed. The Pope, however, was unable personally to visit the schools as soon as he had intended; and sent in his name to Cardinals Antoniani and Baronius. After minutely inspecting everything, they were deeply affected, and delightfully surprised at all they saw: the former promised on the spot, to contribute ten scudi per month towards the support of the schools, an allowance which he continued to the end of his life. Both gave most favourable accounts of the schools to his Holiness, and confirmed him in his design of commissioning his almoner to pay the rent of the schools out of the papal revenues; and it was partly at their recommendation too, that the Pontiff decided on establishing the Pious Schools as a formal congregation.

And now began the heavy tribulations and prolonged trials of Calas Sanctius; which only served to perfect his charity, his patience, his fortitude, and all his other virtues, through the lengthened term of forty-five years. The first blow, (not new to be sure, yet very severe) arose from the masters, the volunteers, as well as the stipendiaries. Their desertion at a moment so unlooked for, was all the more distressing, on account of the number that left him. Some of them abandoned the schools in disgust, others from the vile mo-



tives of lucre and self-interest. After acquiring an excellent method of tuition under Joseph, they withdrew, and opened mercenary schools elsewhere; and carrying with them as they did, the credit of attention and facility in teaching, peculiar to the Pious Schools, they flattered themselves with the hope of materially bettering their condition. But whatever they took with them, they did not carry with them the charity of Joseph, who remained still calm and undismayed under this unlooked-for event; two unfailing supporters constantly sustained him—generous confidence in God, and liberality, which opened his hand to bestow higher salaries.

His most severe trials, however, proceeded from the district school-masters. Hitherto, none but the most destitute and miserable children had frequented the schools of Calasanctius; so far, therefore, the above-named masters joined with the public in exalting a charity which led to no loss of gain on their parts. But when the Pious Schools had acquired a name, and began to be respected, then might be seen mingled amongst the children of the poor, many respectable, genteel, and even noble youths; whereupon those masters changed their tone of truth and justice into one of envy, jealousy, and malice. In their eyes Calasanctius became a ruffian, a hypocrite; the Pious Schools became schools of vice and irreligion; the children were betrayed both in maxims and learning. These men finding their funds diminish, together with the number of their scholars, everywhere spoke in this strain

by way of giving vent to their self-love, which unfortunately is but too often the rule both of the inclinations and judgments of the generality of mankind.

The credit of the Pious Schools was too firmly established in Rome, to allow such calumnies to make any very deep impresssion; for fathers of families, though otherwise favourable to paid masters, were by no means dissatisfied at being able to procure better education for their sons without any need of expense on their part. Finding that open slander availed them not, the maligners had recourse to secret plotting; measures were concerted more than once for the destruction of his life; when informed of this by his friends, he became somewhat more cautious, but was not in the least discomposed. He framed excuses for the delinquents, showed great facility in pardoning, and invariably returned good for evil; but when envy becomes linked with avarice, it knows no bounds. They presented a memorial, a most infamous composition, against Joseph, to Cardinal Camillo Borghese, lately created vicar of Rome by his Holiness. By way of answer to the accusers, his Eminence appointed the servant of God to be the director of the monastery of S. Sylvestro, in Capite; and soon afterwards he assigned him the same office in the monastery of S. Benedetto, in Campo Marzio, as did Cardinal Lante to that of St. Joseph, on the Pincian Hill. Everywhere did he leave the odour of his virtues, which, without his knowing it, tended to confound his

calumniators, who, however, still persisted in their machinations; they were encouraged by some few persons of distinction, upright no doubt in their intentions, but incautious with regard to credulity. These persons undertook to have presented to his Holiness a series of accusations against Joseph and the schools: the memorial was all the more artful, as the presumed delinquencies were the more incredible. Although the just and pious Pontiff was not ignorant that in this instance, spite was opposing zeal, he would neither repulse the accusers, nor condemn the accused. He would not expose either his prudent foresight, or his justice, to any risk; the former, by leaving free course to disorders, the latter, by punishing the innocent. He secretly committed the affair to Cardinals Antoniani and Baronius, informing them of the accusations, and desiring them to visit the Pious Schools by surprise, without giving the slightest hint of their intention, and to examine everything most minutely and rigorously. The commands of the Pontiff were scrupulously obeyed. The result of the investigation was most satisfactory; the holy father, highly consoled by the informations of the two cardinals, resolved to preserve the Pious Schools from all similar vexations in future, declared that he placed them under the immediate protection of the Apostolic See.

This pontifical declaration was most opportune. The district school-masters, determined to use their utmost efforts to destroy the Pious

Schools, addressed themselves to the rector of the Sapienza, representing to him that Calas Sanctius, a foreigner, and a man of no consideration, infringed upon the rector's jurisdiction, by creating and deposing masters without the regular examination, without the regular approbation, and without due dependance on the rector of the university, to whom alone this appertained; that if Joseph, and the masters constituted by him, were subjected to the examination by competent persons, they would be found utterly unqualified for the instruction of youth, and would consequently be compelled to close their schools at once. The worthy rector, who would not have been gained over by calumny, suffered himself to be duped by this statement, and was on the point of prohibiting Joseph from continuing his lessons, when, fortunately for him, he was warned that the holy man was protected by no less a hand than that of the Sovereign Pontiff. We omit relating other similar trials to which the saint was continually exposed: such details would only be tedious to the reader; the grand subject of astonishment to all, consisted in the fact, that the injured party was the only one who never wearied of trials.

## CHAPTER IV.

FRESH TRIBULATIONS AND FRESH CONSOLATIONS OF THE SAINT. HIS HUMILITY. A CARDINAL APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS. THEY ARE REMOVED TO A SPOT NEAR TO S. PANTALEO.

LET us now return to the trials of Calas Sanctius. Pope Clement VIII. died on the 3rd of March, 1605; his successor, Leo XI., quickly followed him to the tomb, closing his mortal career on the 27th of April; and on the 16th of May, that same year, Cardinal Camillo Borghese was raised to the chair of St. Peter, assuming the name of Paul V. When Calas Sanctius presented himself to kiss the foot of his Holiness, he was received with great benignity, and with every demonstration of esteem. The holy father encouraged him to prosecute his pious work, assuring him of his protection, of the continuation of the alms which he had settled on the schools when Cardinal, as well as of the annual pension of two hundred scudi allowed them by Pope Clement VIII. Notwithstanding all these proofs of the Pontiff's favour, the adversaries of Joseph resolved to make an attempt upon the mind of the new Pope, and prejudice him, if possible, against the holy man; deeming it requisite to overthrow the favourable opinion he had of him, an opinion formed deliberately, and after long experience of his con-

summate virtue. Nothing could deter his maligners; but they were careful that their calumnies against the saint and those belonging to him, should be more numerous, more weighty, and covered with finer artifice.

In the year 1606, his Holiness was somewhat imposed upon by these specious reasonings. Being much distressed on the occasion, yet resolved to trace the evil to its root, he commissioned the two cardinals, Cintio Passeri Aldobrandini, and Alessandro Peratti Montalto, to visit the Pious Schools, but to visit them as censors and as judges. Whilst the affair was pending, the venerable Father Giovanni di Gesu e Maria, a great servant of God, and the intimate friend and counsellor of Calasanctius, had occasion to present himself to his Holiness; no one could be better informed than himself of the state and regulations of the Pious Schools. The Pope purposely turned the discourse upon this subject, when he gave such minute and satisfactory details, that in a transport of joy the Pontiff exclaimed, "Oh, F. Giovanni! you have relieved me of a heavy burden! I foresaw that this work ought to subsist, and that sinister representations are made against it." After their visitation, the two cardinals returned to his Holiness, not only fully satisfied, but even filled with admiration. They declared themselves to be so much pleased with the institute, that they both assigned it an annual pension of one hundred and twenty scudi. The Sovereign Pontiff would not be surpassed in generosity by

his two cardinals. He doubled the former annuity of two hundred scudi, fixing it at four hundred. Our merciful and provident God knows how to draw good out of evil, as St. Augustine well remarks.

In order to protect the humble and rising Pious Schools from the annoyances of the malevolent, Paul V. seriously thought of giving them a defence in the person of a Cardinal-protector, of repute and authority; for this purpose he fixed his eye upon Cardinal Lodovico de Torres, Archbishop of Montreale, a man distinguished by birth, learning, and piety. The papal brief, dated March 24, 1607, is highly honourable to his Eminence and to the Pious Schools; in it occur the following words, "In alma urbe auctore Deo institutæ." De Torres began his patronage by bestowing on the schools a fixed annual sum; following this up by his support on every occasion; and this at last put a stop to the storm of calumny and persecution.

But because, amongst so many others, Calasanctius was the most dear to God, so on him alone, as on Tobias of old, did divine Love show itself in trials and tribulations. Let us, therefore, take a glance at Joseph's position, and at the general state of his affairs. In the beginning of the year 1606, his scholars amounted to nine hundred: he found it necessary to transfer the schools to a more spacious residence, and to increase the number of masters to eighteen; of these, only six were able to contribute partially towards their own maintenance, all the rest were provided for at the

expense of our Saint, that is to say, he furnished some with board and lodging only, whilst others required board, lodging, and a salary. The increase of scholars of course led to additional toil; more especially to himself, as he was the soul and support of the work. Nothing but his heroic charity could have enabled him to bear so pressing a burthen. Never would he omit any of his accustomed daily exercises, prayers, contemplations, visits to the churches, hospitals, prisons, to the bashful poor, the duties of the various confraternities to which he was aggregated, and all the rest belonging to his rule of life as already described. The only change he could be induced to make was, reducing his daily visit to the Seven Churches, which he had kept up for fourteen years consecutively, to vacation days only; but he substituted for this relaxation, a rigorous fast of a little bread and water. In the press of his incessant occupation, he often passed whole months without ever undressing himself or lying down in his bed; taking the short rest he allowed himself, with his head reclining on a table; and this not until he was overcome by fatigue and want of sleep. To all this must be added the incessant warfare he waged upon his body; hence the reader may easily infer with what great reason his dependants and companions dreaded the idea of losing him, and how they grieved at even the remote prospect of his death: moreover, they sincerely deplored the unfavourable position of his pecuniary affairs. Joseph, generous of heart and naturally munificent, became still more generous and munificent,



the more confidently he trusted on the treasury of divine Providence ; but to his companions, he seemed far too easy in disposing of present funds, without sufficient foresight for the future. The Pious Schools needed still larger alms for their support ; yet Joseph would dispense considerable sums upon poor prisoners, the sick, some destitute families, as well as a number of miserable children whom he undertook to provide for. In real truth, just about this time (1608) he was in great distress for money. He had been obliged to contract debts, in order to meet the current expenses ; and to complete his distress, his Spanish remittances long due, failed. In this painful conjuncture his associates met in deliberation, as to their best mode of procedure ; they seriously considered the danger (far from improbable) of losing their venerable guide and chief ; the oppressive burden of their daily toil, almost surpassing their strength ; their poverty, all but irremediable ; the fear of at last falling into the power of their creditors, which would compel them to close the schools, and they themselves would become objects of scorn and derision to the whole city of Rome.

Fourteen of them decided on abandoning the Pious Schools, a resolution which they intended soon to carry into effect. They called upon Joseph one morning, to whom they explained the motives of their present conduct, and placed the deeds of agreement in his hands, by way of taking leave of him. The Saint, who had been long accustomed to look up to the Divine mercy on every distressing emergency, did not cast his eyes on earth

to seek for desolation and dismay. Full of the spirit of God, he reproved them for their want of confidence in Him, far more painful than poverty itself: he reasoned with them, he moved their hearts, and, finally, persuaded them to remain. "Go to the schools," said he, "where the poor of Jesus Christ are waiting for you, and you will soon see the effects of His providence."

He hung up a box beside the door of the Pious Schools with this inscription on it, "Alms for the Pious Schools:" the box remained suspended there during one day, and he opened it in presence of his timorous companions that same evening; what a triumph of Divine mercy and the merits of Calas Sanctius! They were astonished beyond measure to find on opening the box, that it contained more than forty scudi in cash, with a banker's order for the sum of two hundred gold crowns: it was ascertained that the latter was the pious and munificent contribution of Cardinal Cesareo Aldobrandini. What an accumulation of virtuous deeds are comprised within this one single incident; virtues which the Christian reader may not only admire with reverence, but may likewise imitate with profit!

So remarkable a circumstance soon became publicly spoken of, and contributed much to increase the credit of Calas Sanctius, which already stood very high. Paul V. being fully convinced of his extraordinary merits, professed the most sincere esteem for him; although he, solely bent upon the welfare of his beloved scholars, never made his appearance at court, unless sum-

moned or driven thither by some extraordinary occurrence. One day, on quitting the church of the Rotonda, the Pope saw him crossing the square. He ordered his retinue and the litter to stop, desired that Joseph might be called, and held a long conversation with him, making minute inquiries, and expressing the kindest interest in the progress of the Pious Schools. Such unusual condescension, by which this great Pontiff paid public homage to the sanctity of Joseph, was extremely painful to the humility of the latter, whilst at the same time it gave rise to rumours in the court as well as elsewhere, that Calas Sanctius would soon be raised to the highest dignities of the church; it could not but be admitted that he was endowed with every qualification for giving honour to any rank; but people little knew the real sentiments of his heart; they were not aware that he had again, very recently, refused two Spanish bishoprics offered him by King Philip III., as well as the archbishopric of Brindisi, to which he had actually been nominated by his Majesty. Public opinion, as but too often happens, was correct in this instance. On the 9th of July, 1609, Cardinal de Torres, the venerated protector of the Pious Schools, expired, whereupon Joseph presented himself at the feet of his Holiness, and besought him to appoint them another similar protector. The Pope replied, "You yourself shall be that protector," thus signifying to him, that he intended to raise him to the cardinalate. Our knowledge of this circumstance is

due to Cardinal Montalto, who happened to be present on the occasion; for Joseph himself would for ever have buried it in oblivion. The words of the Sovereign Pontiff were as a sentence of death to Joseph. He manifested his surprise and grief; he exaggerated his deficiencies; he declared it would be the destruction of the Pious Schools; he argued upon the injury this would be to the poor; in fine, he entreated so earnestly and wept so bitterly, that the Pope felt himself obliged to console him, by promising to give up the idea of his promotion; for his Holiness clearly saw that Joseph's tears were not the result of artifice, but of unfeigned humility. At the new promotion of cardinals decreed on the 17th of August, 1611, Paul V. again placed the name of Calas Sanctius on the list; he was privately informed of this by Cardinal Montalto, who requested him not to disclose the name of the informant. Joseph again had recourse to prayers and tears, but the Pope seemed inflexible, being resolved to honour the promotion, by numbering in it so holy a man; however, he ultimately yielded to the influence and representations of Cardinal Scipione Borghese, whereupon Paul V. appointed Cardinal Benedetto Justiniani, to be the protector of the Pious Schools; he was a pious, learned, friendly, and generous man, who immediately assigned an annual support to the schools. He had the highest veneration for Joseph, and frequently said, "Were it not for human respects, and the honour which is considered due to the purple, I would go to

the street door myself, to receive this holy man whenever he comes to see me."

In the year 1610 Almighty God deigned to remunerate the previous sorrows of Joseph, by affording him a precious subject of consolation, namely, the acquisition of two most desirable members for his schools. The first of these was Don Giovanni Garzia, a young noble of Segovia, who went to Rome in the suite of the Spanish embassy, but shortly afterwards entered the ecclesiastical state, became the faithful companion of Calas Sanctius, and was created the second general of the order in 1656. The other was Bernardino Panicola, who, renouncing his ecclesiastical benefice, voluntarily offered himself as a workman in the Pious Schools.

One day, as Joseph and Garzia were together, Poverty again appeared to him in her usual form, a beautiful and strikingly-modest virgin; she implored his aid, and then vanished. He imposed silence on Garzia, strictly forbidding him to mention the vision. He then began to consider whether in his schools any description of poor youths were excluded. He recollected there were no Jews amongst his scholars, whereupon he sought them out and invited them to share the benefits of education; observing, that they, like ourselves, are the children of one and the same Heavenly Father, who makes no distinction between Jew and Greek. It may be well to remark here, that in his catechizings and moral discourses to the children, Joseph always avoided the detestable and unfeeling

practice (which unfortunately too many of us think to be lawful) of abusing and insulting the poor Jews, in public as well as in private, as if they were not included amongst our neighbours. The generality of people fail in this point, without any remorse; yet such conduct must tend to make the Christian religion odious and contemptible to those who do not profess it, since it gives them reason to believe that such a creed cannot be ruled by the laws of charity. Amongst the children of Calasancius, the Jewish youths were franchised, and they thanked him for it.

In the year 1611 Joseph was blest by the acquisition of a great servant of God, who, with five other most worthy individuals, joined the Pious Schools: this was no other than the venerable Glicerio Landriani of Milan, the grand-nephew of Saint Glicerio Landriani, Archbishop of Milan: moreover, through his mother's family he was related to Saint Charles Borromeo. He was drawn to Rome by the wish to live near his brother, Monsignor Fabrizio Landriani, and by the hope of finding preferment at the pontifical court. Though only twenty-four years of age, he already enjoyed the revenues of the rich abbey of S. Antonio di Piacenza. However, feeling himself called by God to the practice of evangelical perfection, he generously renounced all worldly expectations, and entirely devoted himself to works of piety and self-abnegation. He died in the prime of life, in his thirtieth year, illustrious both for virtues and miracles. On instituting

the process for his beatification, Joseph was examined as one of the witnesses; and his deposition gives us a very faithful idea of the sanctity of Glicerio.

About this time Joseph was obliged again to look for another and larger house, intending to hire it; but encouraged by Landriani and his pecuniary succours, he thought he might venture to purchase the house. After consulting the venerable Father Domenico di Gesu e Maria on the affair, he purchased on the 1st of October, 1611, the palace of D. Vittorio Cenci, near the church of S. Pantaleo, for which he paid the sum of ten thousand scudi. The Pious Schools were opened there in November, and were there continued till 1647, when Calasactius built a college suitably arranged for the more respectable pupils, and the classes of poor children. The Providence of God furnished funds for one who had courageously laden himself with debts, in the sole view of labouring for the public welfare.

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## CHAPTER V.

UNION OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS WITH THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD. THEIR SEPARATION. FOUNDATION AT FRASCATI. THE PIOUS SCHOOLS RAISED TO THE DIGNITY OF A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION.

JOSEPH being anxious to perpetuate the Pious Schools in the Christian republic, thought of aggregating it, or of connecting it in some man-

ner with a religious congregation, already approved of by the Holy See. Such was the congregation styled, "Of the Mother of God," recently founded by the venerable Father Giovanni Leonardi Patrizio of Lucca: to the attainment of this object did Calasanctius now direct his energies: his own humility excluding from his mind all shadow of such an idea, as that of becoming himself the founder of an order. There were several reasons which contributed to fix his choice. This congregation was specially devoted to the active life, and to the service of one's neighbour: it was well provided with members, distinguished for their piety and learning: the priests belonging to it had for some years attended the Pious Schools, and with great zeal and charity heard the confessions of the scholars; a close and cordial friendship existed between Calasanctius and Leonardi; the latter having been commissioned by Pope Clement VIII. to quell the disturbances raised against Joseph by the district school-masters, Leonardi everywhere justified and supported the Saint. After mature deliberation, Calasanctius imparted his views to his spiritual director, and to the Cardinal-protector, who undertook to negotiate the whole affair, in which he succeeded admirably; and on the 14th of January, 1614, he obtained a brief from the Supreme Pontiff, uniting in perpetuity the Pious Schools to the Congregation of the Mother of God. Several conditions were specified in the brief, of which it will be sufficient to mention two: the 1st, that the companions



of Calasanctius should acknowledge him alone for their superior; and that they should, for the remainder of their lives, follow the rule of life which he had introduced amongst them; 2nd, that henceforth no children, whether noble or ignoble, should be admitted into the Pious Schools, but upon the one sole plea of poverty; in a word, they were to be really poor children. A tolerable number of these religious, together with their venerable rector, Pietro Casani, a most exemplary priest, quitted their house of S. Maria, in Portico, for the house near the church of S. Pantaleo, belonging to the Pious Schools, and joining the companions of Calasanctius, entered upon the task with great fervour, and to Joseph's indescribable consolation; who did not, however, on this account, lessen his own toils and fatigue. He distributed all the most commodious and airy apartments amongst the others; reserving for himself one that was very dark and close, separated from the rest, but invaluable to him, because adjoining the Oratory: he styled it his Paradise, and with good reason, since he did nought else in it but enjoy the delights of God, and sweet entertainments with the citizens of heaven. Were we only to consider the implacable, the sanguinary warfare, which in this cell he so perpetually waged against his own body, we ought rather to call it his prison, his dungeon, his slaughter-house. He never changed it, remaining in it till his death: it was then in the same state as it is now to be seen and venerated.

Affairs went on prosperously during the years 1615 and 1616 ; but after that, disturbances both external and internal began to spring up. Some evil-minded persons abused the second condition of the brief alluded to above ; a condition which excluded all but poor children from the schools : they complained that sending their children to the Pious Schools was equivalent to a public declaration of insolvency, or owning that they belonged to the very dregs of society. Poverty, even in the bosom of Christianity, is looked upon as a stain, a badge of shame, unless when viewed in connexion with the Gospel. As soon as equality was banished from amongst mankind, the idea of power and respect was immediately associated with riches ; whilst contempt and opprobrium are generally found leagued with poverty. The natural arrogance of man, which instinctively aims (to say the very least) at equality, recoils from contempt and depression ; hence it seeks to hide from the public eye the rank which gave it birth. No one is ashamed of not having a strong constitution ; of not possessing first-rate talents ; of not being endowed with grace and beauty ; and yet, do not these things depend quite as much upon the Providence of God, as the rank of patrician or plebeian, of rich or poor, in which we happen to be born ? Against the former deficiencies we have not introduced the habit of despising them ; but we have introduced the custom of trampling upon poverty. On this consideration, therefore, several parents withdrew their children from the Pious Schools, numbers

of whom suffered materially in consequence. Annoyed and disgusted at this, the priests belonging to the Congregation of the Mother of God began to complain; and they complained the more, because the occupation of the schools interfered with the duties of their own institute; duties, as they said, to which God Himself had called them. Both circumstances caused Joseph great affliction. In the meantime, in obedience to the orders of his Holiness, he was obliged to repair to Frascati, to open the Pious Schools which had been eagerly asked for there. Amongst others whom he took with him were Dragonetti and Landriani; and these he left there in quality of masters. The Saint's sojourn at Frascati was rendered memorable by a prodigy which he wrought. Hearing a ploughman bitterly deploring the loss of a horse, which constituted the greater part of his wealth, he was moved to compassion, and desired Landriani to go and bless the animal with the sign of the cross: the holy young man obeyed, and the horse instantly returned to life. I should have much to relate if I undertook to describe the veneration, respect, and generosity with which the inhabitants of Frascati welcomed and treated Calasanctius and his companions. But necessity compels me to be brief; let it, then, suffice to say, that the great affection which the Saint ever bore that city was dictated by gratitude.

The ruinous decline of the schools in Rome compelled him to hasten his return thither. Finding that the alienation of all the most worthy priests

of the other congregation, was in a manner now become unavoidable, he had recourse to God and to the Cardinal-protector, whose zeal for the prosperity of the schools was admirable. He immediately informed the Pope of the state of affairs, and consulted him on the measures to be adopted. On the 6th of March, 1617, his Holiness expedited a brief, in which he revoked the former brief of union, and instituted a new congregation, which he denominated the "Pauline Congregation of the Poor of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools." The said brief prescribed that the profession should be of the simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, with the obligation of instructing youth gratuitously;—that professed clerics might receive holy orders under title of Poverty;—that Calas Sanctius was to be the prefect-general of the Pious Schools, either already erected or to be erected;—that the duration of his generalship should depend on the good pleasure of his Holiness;—that he and the congregation were to draw up statutes and suitable decrees, to be approved of by the Apostolic See. It must be observed that in this brief, the restriction with regard to admitting none but the children of the poor, which was so strongly insisted upon in the former brief, was now removed; experience having proved how injurious it had been to the pious work. According to the pontifical brief, not only the priests of the new order, but also those of the other congregation, enjoyed the same privileges, by mutual charity and concord. After

we had received the religious habit, we embraced, and the members of the Congregation of the Mother of God withdrew to S. Maria in Portico, with the exception of a few who preferred remaining at the Pious Schools; the venerable Father Pietro Casani, was of the number. On the morning of the 25th of March, the festival of our Lady's annunciation, Cardinal Justiniani, in the name of his Holiness, gave the habit of the new order to its holy founder, with faculties to give the said habit to his companions; this interesting ceremony took place in the chapel of the cardinal's palace. After receiving the habit himself, he gave it that same morning, with tears of tender delight, to fourteen colleagues, almost all of them distinguished for birth or talent; but what is more important, all were remarkable for sanctity of life. It was at this time that he determined to renounce his noble name of Calas Sanctius, and to style himself only Joseph of the Mother of God; he also gave each of his religious the name of some particular saint. He copied this practice from the Carmelite fathers, at the suggestion of the venerable Father Domenico, a Carmelite, who was his director, and who likewise advised him to establish, as an express point of his rule, that his religious should be discalced, merely being allowed the use of sandals. The latter regulation was abolished by Pope Alexander VIII., who, from the time he was cardinal, had disapproved of it; he scarcely considered it delicate for masters, when in the midst of children, to have their feet uncovered.

Before the full expiration of the year, the saint made his profession of the simple vows, on the festival of St. Joseph, at the feet of Cardinal Justiniani, and in the same chapel where he had received the religious habit. It was now that the mystic espousals were accomplished, which had been prefigured to him in a vision at Assisi, as already related. Joseph prepared himself for this great act, by long and extraordinary devotions, and which he completed by despoiling himself totally of all earthly possessions. He conferred his Spanish benefices on poor but virtuous ecclesiastics; he renounced all right and claim upon his patrimonial inheritance, and distributed all that was valuable at home amongst the poor and destitute. Never did he think himself so rich, as when he had deprived himself of everything for the sake of Jesus Christ. He continued, just as before, to provide the poor children of the schools with all they needed, dispensed his usual alms on beggars, prisoners, and the sick; he maintained whole families of bashful poor, and even went so far as to defray the necessary expenses, for expediting the bulls relating to the benefices of indigent ecclesiastics. He often traversed the streets of Rome, begging from door to door, and he did this much more for the sake of other poor, than for the benefit of his own poor congregation. He had relinquished all possession of, and dominion over property; but never did he lay aside either reliance on the providing hand of God, or charity

towards his neighbour, both of which became all the more brilliant and pure, the less they were mixed with anything of worldly interest or hope.

## CHAPTER VI.

DEATH OF LANDRIANI AND BERNARDINO. SUPERNATURAL GIFTS OF THE SAINT. HIS RETREAT. HE DRAWS UP HIS CONSTITUTIONS.

IN the year 1618, the tender affection of Calasanctius for his beloved Landriani was mortally wounded; he lost the companionship of this noble soul, which took its flight to heaven. The following year he met with another painful loss, in the person of the holy youth, Antonio Bernardino Patrizio Lucchese, who in a few years acquired a vast fund of merit. Being reduced to extremity, when only in his twenty-fourth year, he entreated Joseph to assist and bless him in his last moments; he did not quit the bed of the invalid till night was far advanced; and when he left the infirmary, he desired the watcher to call him instantly if danger appeared. Nevertheless, the sick man died, and Joseph was not called; early in the morning he repaired to the infirmary, where he found people arranging the corpse in the usual manner, and was extremely shocked and grieved. "Good God!" said he to the assistants, "how could you thus let me break my promise?" Then, in a loud



voice, he cried out, "Antonio! Antonio!" At these words the dead man raised his head, opened his eyes, and received the power of speech. Being asked why he had died without Joseph's blessing? and whether he died willingly? he answered the first question with humility, and the second with cheerful resignation. The saint tenderly embraced him, and gaved him his blessing, whereupon Antonio, with the utmost composure, again reposed his head on the bosom of death. It would seem that Almighty God would, even from the very beginning, testify that the new congregation was His own work, and testify at the same time His predilection for His servant Joseph. We will give a few brief instances. He read the secret thoughts of Sorbini whilst he was but a novice. He saw the indiscreet severity with which one of the lay-brothers treated his horse before he reached Rome. He foretold to Father Dragonetti, then one hundred and eleven years of age, that he would be alive for the holy year 1625. On two different occasions, the minister objected to give liberal alms of bread to some poor bashful families, because, as he said, there would not then be enough left for the dinner of the religious, which was close at hand. "Obey," said Joseph to him, "and let God provide for us." On the first occasion, they were supplied by the hands of angels when the dinner hour arrived; and on the second, unexpected human succour repaid with full interest the alms so generously bestowed by Joseph. One morning he desired Father Vittoria and



his companion to set out with all speed to Sabina for some affair of pressing importance; they asked leave to take a little nourishment before they started, seeing that they should have to walk the distance of twenty miles. "Set off at once in all haste," said he to them, "you will find refreshment on the road." Having performed about half the journey, they stopped at a well, situated at a little distance from the road-side, and there they found a meal ready prepared for them. He restored to health, by his prayers, and the mere touch of his hand, one of the lay-brothers, Father Sorbini, and Bernardino Savo, all three of whom were given over by the doctors. He released a possessed woman, the servant of Don Felice Totis, by putting his right hand upon her head. Father Garzia often had occasion to travel to and from Narni; the horse he was in the habit of riding, happened to die; when the saint was informed of this, he sent an order to the animal to rise upon its feet and live; the order was immediately obeyed. The circumstances connected with these facts are indisputable; but the circumscribed nature of a compendium, compels me to withhold details. The humble Joseph flattered himself that he should have been able to conceal the favours of God; but forgot, that, if such was his intention, he ought to have implored them less frequently.

As soon as the Pauline Congregation was established, the Pious Schools flourished anew. The scholars soon amounted to above a thousand, and

belonged to every rank of life. Cardinal Justiniani would have a foundation of the Pious Schools at Narni: Mazzucca, Bishop of Alexandria, would have another in the suburb near St. Peter's, of which he was one of the canons. Prince Perotti, nephew of Sixtus V. wishing to have one of these establishments on his domain at Sabina, requested the Pope's approval, who highly commended the idea, and said to the prince, "It is an institute which even Turks might desire."

Our merciful Lord not only gave Joseph the consolation of beholding the first rays of the propagation of his institute; but would, moreover, favour him with His special blessings. One day as he was assisting at the "Perpetual Prayer," kept up by the scholars in the oratory, when on his knees before the altar, our Blessed Lady holding the infant Jesus in her arms, clothed in glory and surrounded by angels, suddenly appeared before him. Both the mother and Son looked with tender complacency on Joseph and on the youthful group around him; then the Infant raising His divine right hand gave them His blessing, shed over them a species of manna, and disappeared. The Saint was unable to conceal a fact which was witnessed by so many; witnesses too who were sure to speak the more in proportion as he strove to enjoin silence: all, therefore, that he could do, was to attribute this celestial favour to the innocence of his children. To perpetuate the memory of so distinguished a blessing, he caused a representation of it in painting to be

placed over the altar of the said oratory, where it remains to this day.

The Cardinal-protector Justiniani informed Joseph, that Pope V. was of opinion he ought now to apply himself to the task of composing constitutions for his new congregation; the experience of more than two years being sufficient to teach him what practices would be most expedient and salutary. He immediately disposed himself to obey, and chose the house at Narni for the place of his retreat. He began his important task by performing the spiritual exercises for forty days, the more effectually to secure the co-operation of the Holy Ghost. God alone knows what passed between Him and Joseph in the course of those sanctified days.

On the 9th of December, 1620, Cardinal Orazio Lancellotti, an old and signal benefactor of the Pious Schools, died. He benefited them also munificently in death, bequeathing them a legacy of six thousand scudi. In gratitude for this, the Saint not only imposed copious suffrages on his subjects; but would also perpetuate the memory of the good cardinal's benefactions, by inscribing them on a tablet, and by rehearsing them in a splendid funeral oration, delivered at his solemn obsequies, which Joseph would have celebrated without any regard to expense: to discharge a debt of gratitude, even poverty itself should strive to be generous.

## BOOK III.

## CHAPTER I.

HE FORETELLS TO GREGORY XVI. HIS ELEVATION TO THE PAPACY. REFUSES THE PURPLE. THE PIOUS SCHOOLS RAISED TO THE RANK OF A RELIGIOUS ORDER. THE LOVE OF CARDINAL TONTI FOR THEM.

ON the 28th of January, 1622, the Church was again reduced to widowhood by the death of Pope Paul V. whose memory the Pious Schools must ever hold in benediction: he protected, favoured, and benefited them; he even bequeathed his spirit of beneficence in their regard, to the excellent members of his own family; for the house of Borghese ranks among the most illustrious and generous benefactors of the Pious Schools. On the evening of the seventh of February, Alessandro Ludovisi, Cardinal Archbishop of Bologna, arrived at Narni on his way to the conclave. Being informed that Calas Sanctius was then at Narni, he requested a lodging in his house, that he might have the opportunity of an uninterrupted and familiar conference with him; though but slightly acquainted with him, he was fully convinced of his pre-eminent sanctity. In the

course of conversation, the cardinal ascertained that Joseph was then engaged upon the constitutions of his congregation. Expressing a wish to receive from his own lips a few of the leading articles, as well as a general idea of the rules, Joseph willingly gratified him; then, under the influence of the divine Spirit, he uttered these words, "My Lord Cardinal, scarcely will you have entered the conclave, when your Eminence will be elected head of the Church: to you do I recommend my poor congregation." The cardinal was much astonished; the prediction, however, was too precise for him to be able to treat it as a mere customary compliment, so he modestly answered, "Father Joseph, if ever Almighty God gives me power to help you, I promise you to do so." On the morning of the eighth of February, the cardinals entered the conclave: Ludovisi did not arrive until the ninth; and when he entered, it was not with the ambition of being Pope, though with the conviction that such would be the case. He was unanimously elected Pope that very same day, and took the name of Gregory XV.

Calasactius completed his constitutions towards the middle of February, and immediately returned to Rome. On presenting himself to kiss the foot of his Holiness, he was received with affection, joy, benignity, and veneration: towards the end of the interview, Pope Gregory desired him to prepare for his early promotion to the purple. It was not with a view of rewarding Joseph for the prediction so recently made to the Pope on the subject of his election, that the holy

father made this declaration ; it was because he wished to secure to himself, and at all times be able to consult a man whose human prudence was enlightened by a clear sight of the Divine counsels—a man of so great merit before God ; justly feeling convinced, that such a measure would tend to the success of his pontificate. But Joseph was accustomed to these assaults, and was at no loss for reasons, or for ways and means of gaining his own point. Gregory, seeing that his desire was torturing Joseph's humility, even to martyrdom, was obliged to yield, and promise to leave him in peace as he was. He listened to the entreaties of Cardinal Justiniani, the beloved protector of the Pious Schools ; and through his means, Joseph besought the Sovereign Pontiff to approve the constitutions, and thus stamp them with apostolical authority ; and, moreover, that he would deign to raise his congregation from the mere profession of the simple vows, to the rank of a religious order, with solemn vows. His Holiness immediately gave the rescript, committing the cause to the Sacred Congregation appointed for such purposes, consisting of bishops, regular and secular ; of which Cardinal Michelangelo Ponti, a very learned man, was named president. This cardinal was more generally known by the name of "Il Cardinale Nazareno," from his title of Archbishop of Nazareth. Pope Gregory also undertook to continue the annual pension which his predecessors had allowed the Pious Schools ; and renewed the favourable assurances he had given Joseph in their interview at Narni.

The petition of Calasanctius was by the Pope's desire placed in the hands of the congregation on the 16th of March, and unfortunately was opposed by the president; this was a severe affliction to Joseph, and was followed by another within the short space of eleven days. Cardinal Justiniani had zealously laboured to uphold the cause, he had with honour to himself discharged the most difficult offices, he had conciliated the respect both of rich and poor, he had patronised the Pious Schools in every sort of way, and had bequeathed them a legacy of two thousand scudi in order to lessen their debts; this worthy cardinal died at the very time, that, humanly speaking, he seemed most necessary to those who so mainly depended on him. This second affliction was of course irreparable; but Joseph applied himself without delay, to repair, if possible, the former. Placing all his reliance on God and on our Blessed Lady, whom in speaking of, he always called "My Mother," he would not appeal to the Pope, or ask him to appoint another Cardinal-protector. He drew up a learned written statement, in which he proved how fitting it was that his congregation should be raised to the rank of a religious order; and with equal force and modesty he refuted the reasons which had been adduced to the contrary. This document was presented to Cardinal Tonti himself, who was so fully convinced of the truth by the arguments of Calasanctius, and was so delighted with the conversations he held with him, that, from being his

adversary, he became his advocate. This honourable change in Tonti soon changed the aspect of affairs, and the cause of the congregation proceeded prosperously. On the 31st of August a proposal was made to decide the case in favour of Calas Sanctius. On the 18th of the following September Pope Gregory published a decree, raising the Pauline congregation to the rank of a religious order; and on the 31st of January, 1622, he, by another bull, approved the constitutions of the order, as drawn up by the saint: they had previously been examined by Tonti and three distinguished theologians.

Cardinal Tonti conceived so favourable an opinion of the Pious Schools, that he resolved to found a college in Rome, to appoint it his heir, and to place it in perpetuity under the charge of the sons of Calas Sanctius. On the 29th of January he purchased the palace of Don Orazio Gaetano, situated at the back of the Quirinal, and immediately went to take up his residence there. In the course of the following April he fell ill, and made his will on the 19th of the same month, founding and endowing the college, wishing it to be styled the Nazarene College, in memory of the title of his bishopric. He appointed the religious of the Pious Schools to be the administrators, directors, and masters of his college. He also stipulated, that besides the religious, as many scholars (without prescribing their rank) should be maintained therein, as the revenues arising from his property would admit of. These youths were to be instructed and



taught from the first rudiments, up to theology inclusively, as occasion might require. This obligation imposed by Tonti, and accepted by Calasanctius, clearly proves that the Pious Schools had never, even in their first institution, been forbidden to teach either human or divine science. So long back as 1618, Father Pietro Casani had been sent by the saint to teach theology at Narni.

But to resume our narrative. On the 20th of April, Cardinal Tonti, being deputed by his Holiness, would have the consolation, ill as he was, and confined to his bed, of receiving the profession of the solemn vows, as taken by St. Joseph Calasanctius, to whose prayers he earnestly recommended himself, and on the following day surrendered his soul into the hands of his Creator, with every sentiment of unfeigned piety. Everlasting gratitude is due to this great cardinal from the Pious Schools. Some litigation arose with regard to Tonti's inheritance, in consequence of which the Nazarene college could not be opened until the year 1630, of which, more hereafter.

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## CHAPTER II.

JOSEPH ELECTED GENERAL FOR NINE YEARS. HIS JOURNEY TO LIGURIA. HIS VIRTUES AND MIRACLES.

To give canonical form to the new order, the Supreme Pontiff, by a bull dated 28th of April, 1622, constituted Joseph its general for

the term of nine years, appointing at the same time four assistant-generals, who were to aid him in the government. His elevation to this dignity led to no change in his ordinary mode of life ; he continued to toil and labour as before ; in fact, his pre-eminence only served as a stimulus to still greater exertion, for the sake of giving good example to the rest. Although his constitutions do not oblige under sin, (even venial sin,) he himself was ever most exact in their observance, and was most zealous in seeing that others were so too. The fame of his sanctity, which was now beginning to spread far and wide, together with the acknowledged utility of his institute, led many persons to wish for more numerous foundations of the Pious Schools, which were already propagated in Lombardy and Liguria. The saint deplored his inability to second the wishes of many princes, magistrates, and bishops, who applied to him for members ; but he was compelled to proceed cautiously, owing to their paucity of numbers, as well as of funds. In the midst of his poverty, however, he was always generous to the poor, and frequently repeated the oracle of Jesus Christ, " Give, and it shall be given unto ye." One day when there were only two loaves left in the house, he ordered Father Bandoni to give them to a poor man who had nothing to eat. Scarcely had the mendicant turned from the door, than a written order for bread to the amount of four scudi was placed in the father's hand. Another time a gentleman in reduced circumstances called on Joseph, telling

him that he and his six children had not broken their fast since the morning of the preceding day; the holy man asked the sacristan whether any money for masses had been put in the alms-box. And being answered in the negative, he sent for the minister, and inquired what quantity of bread there was in the house. "Only four loaves," replied he, "and that will scarcely suffice for our twelve invalids, amongst whom it must be divided, for they already need a little nourishment." "Give them without reply," said Joseph, "to this poor gentleman; God will know how to provide for His sick, and for the healthy too." Almost immediately afterwards an alms arrived from Cardinal Montalto, for a very large supply of bread. It would almost seem as if Almighty God sent beggars to Calas Sanctius, on purpose to reduce him to penury, that His omnipotent hand might thereby find occasion to recompense his confidence and his charity.

In the year 1623, he thought it advisable to undertake a journey into Liguria. On the 7th of April he reached Savona, where the house destined for their noviciate was situated. Here he gave the habit to three noble youths of high promise. Then he visited the prisons, when he was met processionally by the inhabitants, and conducted to the church, where he delivered a person possessed by the devil, who immediately returned thanks to God and to His servant. Public discord and homicide then raged in this territory, to the great grief of Don Pietro di

Toledo, Governor of Finale. Joseph undertook to be the peace-maker. By the power of his prayers, his evangelical eloquence, and his prudent, equitable proposals, he succeeded in calming both factions, and completely restored union and harmony, to the great delight, as well as benefit, of the public. When Don Pietro was informed of this satisfactory result, he suddenly broke off in the middle of some very important business, and hastened to his oratory to return thanks for it to Almighty God. Happening one day to meet a little child, the son of Don Giovanni Ferrer of Arragon, he said, "This child will in due time be a distinguished religious of the Pious Schools," and such really was the case.

He next proceeded to Genoa, where he had the mortification of being obliged to refuse the application made by some of the Genoese senators, who much wished to establish the Pious Schools there. He promised them, however, that he would send some of his religious thither in the course of the following year, and he kept his word.

On his return to Rome, the house of S. Pantaleo was almost immediately full of invalids, and utterly destitute of everything. Being much inconvenienced by the want of beds and room, he took one of the novices into his own cell, and gave up his own poor couch to him. The prevailing indisposition lasted for some considerable time, during which, the few hours' rest which he allowed himself, were taken reclining on a wooden chest, with a cushion under his head.

He did still more for another of the novices, whose life was despaired of by the physicians: he took him by the hand, desired him, in the name of God, to sit up in his bed, and cured him.

Pope Gregory XV. died on the 8th of July, 1623. In addition to the suffrages prescribed by the constitutions for such occasions, Joseph appointed others, in grateful consideration of the benefits which the order had received from this Pontiff, who was succeeded on the 6th of August by Cardinal Maffeo Barberini, henceforth styled Urban VIII. On the 4th of October several religious from a distant house unexpectedly arrived very late in the evening at S. Pantaleo: the supper hour was at hand, the religious were famished, the store of provisions was quite inadequate to the number of mouths, whilst of money there was absolutely none. The cook, in despair, ran off to the general, who, with his usual composure, merely said, "Recommend yourself to God, and to Saint Francis, whose feast we this day celebrate:" and thus dismissed him: the brother proceeded to the choir to pray, as desired by the Saint, and from thence returned to the kitchen to distribute the supper-portions: whilst in the act of doing so, he heard a voice say, "Thou dost not know how to manage:" at the same time he perceived a Franciscan standing by his side, who, taking the knife out of his hand, cut up a little pie into forty large portions, (the religious were forty in number,) and then disappeared. After his first moment of astonishment, the cook adored our

Divine Lord, returned thanks to Saint Francis, and venerated Calasanctius more than ever. Unless it be for the accomplishment of other hidden purposes, Divine Providence does not permit this great misery where there is not also a corresponding amount of faith. Fourteen novices received the habit in Liguria on the same day, and set out all together for the noviciate at Rome, under the guidance of Father Gian-Stefano Spinola, a great servant of God: they had no provision of any kind for their journey; which, with the exception of crossing the gulf of Genoa, was entirely performed on foot; and yet they never were at a loss for food, even in the least inhabited districts; the Saint, though at a distance, supplied all their wants by miracle.

To secure more ample space for the many novices who put on the habit, he transferred the noviciate in 1624 to a more suitable place, between the four fountains and the baths. He frequently repaired thither to examine the vocation of these young men, to exercise them in humility, and to infuse in their hearts the spirit of every virtue. Being there in his cell one morning in the month of May, he suddenly called his next neighbour, and bade him run to the room occupied by a novice, called Antonio Beruti: the other instantly obeyed, and found the novice seized with a violent fit of illness. Joseph himself soon afterwards entered the room, and desired that the last sacraments should be administered: within the brief space of an hour the young man was a corpse.

Another day he sent for three novices, and with great kindness told them they must absolutely quit the noviciate ; they very humbly remonstrated, observing that they were not conscious of any fault, but the Saint replied, " My children, God sees the heart : examine yourselves well, and you will find that this order will not suit you." Then they all owned that he was right, and that he was a prophet. Another time he dismissed one of the lay-brothers, whom he discovered to be of a very bad disposition : the man threw himself into a very violent passion, declaring that he would not stir until he had first killed Joseph : he waited for him in the passage, armed with a bludgeon, and as the holy man passed along he aimed a heavy blow at him, but God did not permit it to take effect, in mercy He prevented so dreadful a parricide.

When the religious became aware of this monstrous attempt, they were filled with indignation against the infamous assassin, and earnestly entreated to have him driven out of the house at once. Joseph was the only one willing to show him the least degree of compassion, the only one willing to allow him to remain a little longer in the house. Soon after his expulsion, the man fell dangerously ill, whereupon the Saint immediately went to visit him, and regularly sent him a daily supply of provisions for his sustenance. Could forbearance be more heroical ? or could forgiveness be more sincere ?

As the holy year was at hand, Fathers Pietro Casani, Francesco Castelli, and Paolo Otonelli

wrote to the general, requesting his permission to repair to Rome, that they might gain the benefit of the indulgences. In his answer, he desired the first and third named to come, adding that Father Castelli might remain where he was, because he would be alive when the next holy year came round. In effect, although the three were of equal age, Casani died in 1647, Ottonelli in 1626, whilst Castelli actually was in Rome in 1650, and did not die till six years later. In the middle of December, 1624, Father Antonio Cittadini received the last rites of the Church : Joseph visiting him said, "Would it not be gratifying to your mind if you were to live nine days longer, and thus be able to gain these great indulgences?" "I have no other wish in this world," replied the dying man ; whereupon Joseph exhorted him to have faith, and told him that he would live without pain till the eve of the Nativity, when he again communicated. Hearing the discharge of canon from the castle of Saint Angelo, announcing the commencement of the holy year, he sent for father general, and asked his blessing, saying to him, "My hour is now come." Joseph blessed him, and he sweetly expired immediately afterwards. All this will suffice to show how dear Calasanctius was to God.



## CHAPTER III.

PIETY OF JOSEPH AND HIS COMPANIONS DURING THE  
HOLY YEAR. MORE MIRACLES, &c.

THERE are perhaps few years which tend as much to the embellishment of this history, if we consider the brilliant virtues and miracles of Joseph—as the holy year of 1625; to avoid unnecessary repetition, we refer the reader to his practices of piety as already detailed in the holy year of 1600. He summoned many of his religious to Rome, from various distant places, especially those whom he foresaw would die before the year 1650. He also bade sixteen novices from Liguria to repair at once to Rome, “In order,” as he said, “that they might learn how to sanctify themselves.” He divided his religious into small companies, and thus dispersed them through the city of Rome, appointing them all to certain works of charity. He was most anxious to be of service to the Church, and desired a good number of his priests to devote themselves to the confessional, he himself giving them the example. One day he met a crowd of poor pilgrims, whose querulous complainings made him suppose they were in some serious trouble; so he inquired the cause of their distress. They told him, that being found ignorant of the principal articles of faith, they had been rejected from the tribunal of penance; and that having no one to instruct them, they

were in despair at the idea of losing the blessings of the jubilee ; more especially after the toil and fatigue of their long journey, they felt it very disheartening to be obliged to return to their own country no better than they left it. As the saint listened to them his heart expanded, and he promised to assuage their tears. He smilingly invited them to S. Pantaleo, instructed them, and furnished them with alms for several days : he prepared them for the sacraments, enabled them to gain the indulgences, and they returned home well-instructed Christians.

He seemed to be all hand when labour was in question, and all eye where there was need of vigilance in behalf of the poor, the scholars, or his religious ; to the latter, he was often present in spirit when absent in body. He appeared to one of them at Frascati, desiring him to proceed immediately to Rome. In the same manner he appeared in the house of the noviciate, and, with a severe countenance reprehended the rector for his negligence in the service of God ; for not being exact in calling the community to certain prayers at noon ; and at the same time, he gave the same reprehension to the religious whose duty it was to give the public sign.

The pastoral vigilance of Urban VIII., led him to insist on the apostolic visit being made to all the holy places, churches, and religious communities of Rome in the course of the holy year. The visitation of St. Pantaleo was confided to Monsignor Seneca. The prelate spent several

days in examining the state of the religious, their spirit and guidance. He examined their system in their schools, and the spiritual and literary cultivation of the scholars. At the end of his visit, he raised his hands to heaven, and exclaimed, "Blessed are ye, if ye have the gift of perseveranco!" And yet he had been accustomed to see great things in the way of virtue, having been well acquainted with St. Charles Borromeo, whose vicar-general he had been.

A very serious accident happened one day; but an accident of such a nature as may easily happen in schools where there are a large number of boys. As they were going up stairs to their class, two of the boys began to quarrel and fight; one of them had a bone ink-stand in his hand, with which he struck his opponent in the left eye: so furious was the blow, that the eye was forced out of the socket, and hung down over the cheek, so far as nearly to reach the lip; the screams of the wounded youth brought forth all the masters, who were petrified with horror when they beheld so frightful a spectacle. When Joseph reached the spot, he began, with tranquil countenance, to caress the child; he then replaced the eye in its socket, held his hand over it for a short time, made the sign of the cross upon it, saying to the child at the same time "Now, be good!" and then sent him into the school-room; not the slightest vestige of injury could be perceived upon the eye; but those who witnessed the miracle were as-

tounded, and were filled with veneration for the servant of God. Being once called to hear the confession of one of his penitents who was dying, on arriving at the house he found her already dead ; he prostrated himself in prayer, and recalled her to life.

Being urged by letter to hasten to Frascati, because Father Garzia, who was dying, had lost both speech and sense, he answered, "Father Garzia will wait until I arrive." Two days later the saint went over to Frascati, when his presence, and his touch, cured the sick man. He conferred the same benefit on Reginald da Todi, a relative of the Bishop of Alessano, and on several other persons. Two instances of grateful remembrance shall close this article. The bishop of Alessano, and Orlandi, the secretary of Cardinal Lante, died in 1625. Both of them held Calasactius in the highest veneration, and were much attached to the Pious Schools, and each of them bequeathed ten thousand scudi to the order. These handsome legacies enabled Calasactius to pay off his debts due on St. Pantaleo, another house, and the noviciate ; and, having done so, he very readily began to contract others. In effect, his unbounded charity towards the necessitous, usually kept him on the verge of bankruptcy. He seemed to have opened a banking-house for the poor, of whom he sent none away without relief. He ordered his religious, during his temporary absence from Rome, never to refuse an alms to any one who asked it. Whenever he heard the door-bell ring, he would run

thither himself, to see if it was some poor person in need of help. After the religious had dined, he himself would distribute the remnants amongst the beggars, general and founder as he was of a religious order. S. Pantaleo, where he usually resided, was turned, as we may say, into a hospital, open to all the miserable, but especially to poor priests who had no where else to go. It is astonishing what an amount of help he regularly afforded to different families, some of them respectable, and even noble, who had fallen into poverty; to some he assigned a certain sum of money, to others provisions, and to others clothing and provisions. "For more than two years," writes Don Emmanuele di Simoni, of himself, "he kept me at S. Pantaleo, providing me with food, clothing, and every other necessary, allowing me to study from grammar up to logic, and even having me taught figured music." From this date till his death, he furnished food and clothing for the noble widow Giulia Merenda, who was in a state of sad destitution: nor did he die without providing for her, as will be seen later. An English gentleman, named Thomas Cochet, having abjured heresy in London, under the direction of a Dominican, was obliged to seek safety in flight, and abandoned himself with all his family into the arms of Providence. On reaching Florence, he was directed to the father of poor at Rome, that is to say, to Calas Sanctius. No sooner was the introductory recommendation placed in his hands, than he began to look out for a suitable

abode for the gentleman, his wife, and two children; and then, with a munificent hand, he provided whatever was requisite for a family, which had recently lived in luxury and abundance; he could not of course place them on their former footing, but he took care to preserve them from feeling the effects of their present poverty. When Mr. Cochet was presented to the Pope, he informed his Holiness of his position, and of the opportune succour received from Calas Sanctius. The benevolent Pontiff assigned him a certain pecuniary allowance, rejoiced that he had been so fortunate as to meet with Joseph, and then added, "We ourselves will recommend you still further to him, that he may assist you with his charity, as he does the whole of Rome." The conduct of Joseph served more and more to convince Cochet that he was happily in the bosom of that Church, in which God Himself enkindles and nourishes a flame which belongs not to this earth.

Count Malatesta Manzoli, being convicted of high-treason, was condemned and beheaded; all his moveable and immoveable property was confiscated. His widow, Bentivoglia Malatesta Manzoli, with three daughters and one son, was deprived of everything, they were allowed nothing but the air they breathed, and the clothes actually on their backs; the miserable mother knew not which way to turn, and could do nothing but weep over her unfortunate children. Overwhelmed by multiplied sorrows, she was on the point of yielding to the suggestions of despair,

(too often, alas! listened to by those who follow not the impulse of Christian virtue,) when, fortunately, Calasanctius heard of her deplorable situation; he spoke very earnestly to the lady, persuading her not to distrust the merciful providence of God, and became himself the bail and minister of this heavenly Providence. He immediately admitted her young son into the house, at San Pantaleo, and fixed a regular allowance of provisions and ready money on the ladies; and that their indigence might even be provided for with decorum, he allowed for the expenses of a man-servant and a waiting-woman. Whilst this distressed family hung, as we may say, upon his hands, he looked around and levied charitable contributions from many a cavalier and noble lady. Nor was he satisfied with all this, he addressed a petition to Cardinal Barberini, to obtain a revocation of the rescript which had already confiscated all the property; he seconded his petition with representations, entreaties, and tears. Before this, however, his prayers had appealed powerfully to the Master of all hearts, and, at length, the soul of the Pontiff was changed, and the irritated feelings of the cardinal were soothed; they were moved to mercy and compassion, to the glory of the prince, to the honour of the family, and to the destruction of misery, the following rescript was issued from the state offices: "For the sake of justice, let all the moveables, dowries, all due rents, and the value of whatever has been alienated, (the whole to be confronted with

the inventory,) be restored to the petitioner and her children." Surely, never was charity more indefatigable, more persevering, or more brilliant! Young girls who were exposed to danger, frequently had recourse to Joseph, who provided them with a sufficient dowry for their marriage, or for their admission into a convent. He obtained employment for some, opened shops for others, purchased tools for mechanics, and strove to assist all, that all might be enabled to earn something, and at the same time be preserved from sin and idleness. Those who witnessed Joseph's charity were astounded, and could not comprehend how a man, really poor himself, was yet always rich enough to succour all the poor and miserable. His works of mercy were by no means restricted to the holy year; they continued throughout the whole life of Calas Sanctius, for, in truth, his was no passing charity; and, if I have noticed this year in particular, it is that I may have no need of returning to this subject. The virtues of the saints, (even those who were most fruitful in deeds,) require only once to be alluded to by writers of their Lives, but ought always to be remembered and admired by the reflecting reader.



## CHAPTER IV.

HE PRAYS FOR HIS ENEMIES. HIS ILLNESS. GOES TO NAPLES, WHERE HE PERFORMS MANY MIRACLES, &c. RETURNS TO ROME.

IN the year 1626, he received information from one of his religious, whom he had sent to Messina, to found a house there at the request of the senate, that a certain Oderico Valmerana was propagating a thousand calumnies against the order and its founder; this man had been expelled from the illustrious Society of Jesus, and at the request of the Cardinal-protector, Justiniani, but much against the will of Calasanctius, was in 1617 admitted into the order of the Pious Schools, from whence it was found necessary to dismiss him in a short time. His calumnies against Joseph arose from envy and a vile spirit of revenge. By way of answer, the saint ordered prayers to be offered up for the unfortunate slanderer; such is the vengeance of the just! In Lent Joseph was seized with a dangerous illness; one morning, as he was begging as usual from street to street, carrying a large bag upon his shoulders, he was overtaken by a heavy shower of rain; sinking beneath his burthen, drenched with rain and perspiration, and lacerated by his hair-cloths, he reached home in a fainting condition; however, he merely dried his bare feet, and then pro-

ceeded to say his mass ; nature was unequal to the task, a violent fever seized him, accompanied by very painful and dangerous symptoms ; he received the holy Viaticum at his own request. During his illness, his bed became a pulpit, from whence he taught patience and the manner of dying the death of the just. After receiving the Viaticum, he wished to be left alone for some hours, when he was informed, in some supernatural manner, that the most Holy Mother of God had obtained his cure, in order that he might do penance for his sins ; he therefore made a vow to dedicate the first church, erected by his order, to her ; he fulfilled his vow that same year, when the church at Frascati was completed.

As soon as his strength was tolerably restored, he thought of going to Naples, where the Pious Schools were much wished for. Before setting out upon his journey, he wrote a very affectionate letter to his sister, Donna Giovanna, recommending her to devote herself entirely to good works, because the day of her death was near at hand. She placed implicit reliance on his words, and it was well for her she did so, as in a very short time she was summoned to another world. He restored Father Alacchi to health when he was actually at the point of death. By merely making the sign of the cross, he relieved the Marquis Bernardino Biscia from a bone which was obstinately fixed in his throat, with evident danger of choking him, and which two surgeons were in vain endeavouring to extract. He imputed none of the glory

to himself, and set out in his usually humble style for Naples, taking with him some of his religious. On arriving there, he cured his host, Don Aniello Falco, of an inveterate wound in the leg, by blessing it with the sign of the cross. Amongst the various localities which were offered him for the establishment of his order, he chose not the most salubrious, or the one most convenient for himself and his religious, but the one where he could best serve the poor, and so contribute to the glory of God. He selected the quarter called the *Duchessa*, inhabited chiefly by the lower classes; in a word, the seat of immorality, abounding in houses of ill fame, besides an infamous theatre served by the most licentious characters. The public authorities issued an order that the plans of Calasancius should be carried out; that the infamous houses should be turned into schools for innocent children; and the theatre be changed into a temple of the living God. But zeal always meets with contumely and contradiction. Scarcely was the order of the city authorities made known, when the comedians, whose gains are generally the wages of vice, became furious: three of the more daring and violent overwhelmed Calasancius with a torrent of abuse and threats, urged on as they were by a passion that knows neither modesty nor civility; these were Andrea Valle the manager of the theatre, Francesco Longavilla an excellent buffoon, and Orazio Gratiullo, who from being an indifferent lawyer, became a comic actor, contriving to gain from the stage a maintenance which the law-court denied him. The

Saint listened to their invectives with a composed countenance : when they ceased he quietly placed his hand on Longavilla's shoulder, who was the most audacious of them all, and said, "Nothing shall be done but that which God wills." His unexpected gentleness more than half disarmed them. He then made them a very serious discourse, speaking, however, very affectionately on the sinfulness of their profession, on the necessity and the difficulty of repairing the scandals they had caused, on the judgments of God, and on an eternity of suffering. His words did not fall on the rock, nor amidst thorns, but in a soil moistened by the grace of God : they wept, they entered upon the right path, thanking Calasanctius a thousand and a thousand times ; not only did they devote themselves to public penance under his direction and advice, but contributed much to gain many other souls, and ended their lives by a holy edifying death.

As our Lord had deigned to illustrate by miracles the Saint's arrival at Naples, so would He likewise render his departure memorable. One day, his religious were absolutely destitute of everything, and the dinner-hour was at hand : they had recourse to him, representing to him that there was every prospect of their observing an involuntary fast. Joseph sent them all to the church to pray ; and he, at the same time, placed his faith and hope at the foot of the throne of God : three loads of provisions, deposited at the door by unknown hands, were the proof of the divine love for Calasanctius.

He returned to Rome about the end of April, 1627, and was immediately besieged with requests for new foundations in the States of the Church in the kingdom of Naples, in Sicily, in Lombardy, in Tuscany. The institute was, according to the general opinion, deemed very useful to the public, and to many persons it was extremely pleasing. Cities were willing to receive a religious order, which, satisfied with bare necessities, required no superfluities; hence it was looked upon as a great good, to be obtained at a low price. This same reason made the refusal of the Saint appear all the more uncivil; to his great regret he was obliged to decline several offers for new foundations, in consequence of his comparative scarcity of numbers. He imparted his anxieties upon the subject to his intimate friend, Monsignor Prospero Fagnani, secretary of the congregation of bishops and regulars; who found means to soften his regret, and at the same time, withdraw him from his embarrassment: he procured an order from the said congregation, forbidding Calas Sanctius to undertake any new foundations for the space of two years. Thus his refusal, being pronounced necessary by legitimate and superior authority, was received with respect, and occasioned no feeling of offence.

One day when Joseph arrived at the house of the noviciate, he was told that one of the lay-brothers had accidentally driven a chip of wood into his eye, whilst splitting a heavy log with an axe; and that both the physician

and surgeon were unwilling to attempt its extraction, so dangerous would be the operation. He desired that the brother might be sent to him in the garden, where, unbandaging his eye, he touched the chip with a blade of grass, when it instantly fell to the ground, and the poor man was at once relieved both from pain and danger. Soon after this he fell ill himself, of malignant erysipilas in the leg, accompanied with fever, violent inflammation, and acute pain: for four days and nights he experienced not an interval of ease; yet neither his lip or heart ever uttered a complaint: from time to time he pronounced the sacred names of Jesus and Mary, more for comfort of soul than for alleviation from pain. Believing that death was hovering over the sick man's bed, the doctors did their duty, and recommended the administration of the holy Viaticum, whereby the ardour of his charity and piety was, in a great degree, gratified: the surrounding spectators clearly saw that he, who was receiving the Lamb of God, was more than an ordinary Christian—more than a priest, in fine, that it was Calas Sanctius. Requesting to be left alone, he had full liberty to enjoy his colloquies with heaven. Whilst he was in this delightful solitude, his special patroness, S. Teresa, visibly appeared to him, and assured him that he had not yet reached the term of his labours; on the contrary, that he had still to drink the largest and most nauseous draught from his cup of bitterness. He adored the supreme decree, considering that it was a great benefit to live and to suffer.

## CHAPTER V.

FIRST GENERAL CONGREGATION OF THE ORDER. THE  
SAINT'S DISENGAGEMENT FROM EARTHLY THINGS.  
OTHER PRODIGIES.

IN October, 1627, the Saint assembled the first general chapter, to make suitable regulations for his new-born order: the assembly was composed of the assistants, the provincials of Rome, Naples, and Genoa, and a secretary. The party was but small, but it was a party of Saints: it was unanimously wished that the venerable servant of God, Domenico di Gesu e Maria, the discalced Carmelite so often mentioned, should be present at the meeting; and such was the case.

The following year was little else than one continued trial of patience for Joseph: at one time the wound in his leg occasioned excessive pain, allowing him no rest; then again an obstinate tertian fever confined him to his bed, all of which gave him new motives for blessing God who thus deigned to visit him. The few intervals left free from these attacks, were devoted to his usual works of charity: one of these intervals has been rendered memorable by a most disinterested disengagement from worldly things, being remarkable in many respects. Don Gabriele Squarciafichi of Casale in Montserrat, was taken very dangerously ill: he was the warm friend of Calasanctius; was possessed of a handsome revenue amounting

to a hundred and twenty thousand scudi. When on the point of quitting this life, he sent for Joseph that he might receive the last blessing from him, and to give him a final proof of his love and respect, he declared that he appointed the congregation of Pious Schools to be his sole heir. The Saint visited, consoled, and blessed him, but firmly refused to accept the inheritance. Don Gabriele recovered, and after his recovery renewed his assaults upon Joseph's constancy for several months but without effect; so at last, to avoid leaving a fruitless will behind him, he was compelled to adopt another heir; and yet, at this very time, the congregation was in such straitened circumstances, that so opportune a subsidy might have been looked upon as a provision sent from heaven. Calasanctius had already despoiled himself of his patrimonial and ecclesiastical revenues; the number of religious whom he had to maintain was considerably increased; alms were diminishing, and the only abundance he could boast of was, an abundance of penury. "God alone knows," said he in a letter to Father Garzia, written about this time, "to what straits I am reduced: the house at Rome is in such extreme poverty and want of bare necessities, that if your Reverence knew all, you would be astounded—debts increase every day, but not so the alms;" nevertheless, he did not hesitate in these distressing circumstances, to refuse the danger of a rich inheritance. He looked upon a handsome perpetual revenue, (such a one as would for ever free the order from indigence,) not as



a subsidy, but as the destroyer of religious poverty, and as the stumbling-block to filial confidence in God.

But these traits of disinterested generosity were not new to him. At Rome, Naples, and Frascati, he had frequently renounced testamentary inheritances, either because they were too rich, or as being injurious to the relatives of the testator. He strongly reproved that misinterpreted piety, which would prejudice family claims for the sake of enriching the altar. However, he earnestly strove to maintain his just right to the inheritance bequeathed to him by the late Cardinal Tonti, for the foundation of the Nazarene college; the will and testament of his Eminence being legally disputed by various parties; nor ought his pertinacity on this occasion to be looked upon as a contradiction of his conduct to his words; on the contrary, it is only an admirable proof of the coherence of his virtues. Cardinals had not in those days full liberty in the disposal of their property. Tonti's revenues had chiefly been derived from the sanctuary, and were ultimately destined to be employed in the education and maintenance of poor youths, who, to respectability of birth, should join integrity of morals, and such talents as should enable them to serve either the Church or state. Therefore, whilst Joseph maintained the rights of the future college, according to the intentions of the pious testator, he was, in fact, upholding the rights of the sanctuary, and promoting the welfare of the republic, both in a civil and ecclesiastical point of view: he was

depriving the Tonti family of nothing that really belonged to it, and was acquiring for the Pious Schools little else than a capital of toil and merit. His virtue was too prudent and religious to allow him to be intimidated either by the contradictions or the allurements of self-interest.

It is not my intention to enter into many details upon the extraordinary graces bestowed on Calas Sanctius ; such histories seldom produce any other fruit in the reader's mind than a sterile admiration ; however, they must not be wholly passed over in silence, for this would be an injury to the liberality of God, and to the merits of our Saint. Our reference to them from time to time, may serve to convince scoffers that these gratuitous gifts are still living and active in the Church of God, stamping it with the brilliant character of truth, proving its divinity, and confounding all erroneous sects. In this view, therefore, we publish them to the praise of the Lord ; for the glory of the Church His spouse ; in gratitude to Him for placing us in the bosom of such a mother. In the course of these two years (1627, 1628,) Joseph restored three dying persons to perfect health ; namely, Fathers Zamparelli, and Vincenzo Berro, members of his own congregation, and the young Marquis Bernardino Biscia, whose pious family felt convinced that the prayers and merits of Calas Sanctius were amongst the most efficacious of aids in all desperate cases. He commanded a professed cleric, Giuseppe Mazzocca, who was in bed in a death-swoon, to arise, dress himself, and set out to

Naples. He ordered Father Giovanni Garzia, then very ill at Frascati, to repair to Rome. The sudden cure of these two, was the recompense of their prompt obedience to the orders of their good father. The professed cleric, Sylvestro Bellei, suffering from violent fever, begged as a favour, on the eve of Corpus Christi, to be allowed to receive holy communion on the festival itself: the Saint answered him, that on that triumphal solemnity, it would be more becoming in him to go and communicate in the church: at the same moment, the invalid found himself in perfect health, which circumstance no doubt tended to increase both his reverence and his faith. After repeated importunities, Father Giovanni Domenico Consentino drew from the Saint a reluctant permission to return to his own country, to visit his aged father: "Very well, go," said Joseph to him, "but since you go in such manner, you will have to suffer many inconveniences, trials, and misfortunes." During his short passage by sea, he met with nothing but whirlwinds and storms; inevitable death seemed to threaten him several times, and after being tossed about on various coasts, two months elapsed before he reached Cosenza. Even when he at length arrived at home, he found little or no repose after all the dangers and fatigue of his journey. A dangerous fever seized him, which reduced him to extremity; so strengthening himself with the last rites of the church, he prepared himself for his passage into eternity. As he was deploring with

bitter tears the fault which had drawn upon him so many misfortunes, the holy founder appeared to him, and with a serious countenance, thus addressed him: "Learn to submit to obedience;" adding in a sweeter tone, "courage! you will not die this time: our Lord restores you to health." These words seemed to arouse the dying man, he humbled himself, believed, and was cured. He lost no time in returning to Rome, where, on his knees before the father-general, he begged pardon for his fault. Before the expiration of two months, the Saint sent for him, and desired him to start at once for his own home, where urgent business required his immediate presence: although he was perfectly ignorant of any such necessity, he inquired for a ship and embarked: he reached Cosenza without accident, and found his father on his death-bed, whom he assisted in every way, both as a priest and as a son; and after arranging the affairs of his family, he reached Rome, after a prosperous sail of a few days: how many prodigies are comprised in this one!

Having sent five of his religious, by sea, from Rome to Naples, they were overtaken by a furious storm, which threw the mariners as well as passengers into dreadful consternation; at the height of the danger, Giuseppe Apa, one of the five religious, invoked the aid of their saintly founder; casting at the same time a small wooden cross which he had given him at parting, into the turbulent waves: the hurricane immediately ceased, and the little cross was seen floating on the sur-

face of the water, immediately preceding the vessel, to which it seemed to serve both as escort and security. In March 1629, Cardinal Ginnasi, then seventy-nine years of age, was taken dangerously ill, and reduced to the point of death. He summoned Calasanctius to his bed-side, that he might be assisted by so holy a man in his last passage. Joseph promptly obeyed the summons; exhorted him to patient endurance, and to the practice of other virtues; adding, however, that it was not yet time for him to expect death, because our Lord intended him to live ten years longer. Ginnasi's high opinion of Joseph's sanctity, led him to place more dependance on his word, than on all the threatening symptoms of sickness and old age. He completely recovered his health, and felt no apprehension throughout the term specified by Joseph; but at its expiration in 1639, the cardinal was convinced that the end of his life was close at hand, and prepared himself accordingly: he expired on the 12th of March, aged eighty-nine years.

He foretold to Cardinal Garzia Millini, the hour of his death, in order to assure him that he would not fail to be present at, and assist him in his last passage.

One morning at break of day, as he was already vested for the celebration of the holy sacrifice, the sacristan recollected that he had no candles, having forgotten to purchase them the previous day; he was extremely distressed at his own neglect, the more so as it was impossible to procure any at that early hour, when the shops

were still closed. He was obliged, therefore, to own a fault which there was no means of concealing; when, to his astonishment, he beheld two small candle ends, which Joseph took into his hands, extend themselves out into long candles; for a considerable length of time did these candles supply the altar, so that the sacristan had no occasion to purchase others; the saint, however, strictly forbade him to mention the circumstance to any one; the prohibition was difficult, and more painful to the good brother, than the fault committed, which had now become so memorable and joyful to him.

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## CHAPTER VI.

HE OPENS THE NAZARENE COLLEGE. FORGIVES MANY INJURIES. RECEIVES FROM GOD MANY CONSOLATIONS.

ON the first day of the year 1630, Joseph opened the Nazarene College, an event which had long been desired. The affair of the heirship was not cleared up, and whilst this litigation was pending, several unknown creditors preferred their claims, so that the revenues were materially diminished. Although these did not furnish sufficient funds for the maintenance of the scholars and the masters, Calasanctius was resolved, nevertheless, to carry out the views of the pious testator. Of expansive heart and liberal hand, even in his poverty, he hoped to be able to maintain them at the expense of the Pious

Schools, although obliged to turn mendicant himself, that he might not rob the latter of the education and support which was their right. We gather from his letters written in 1636, that he had not as yet obtained the rents which had been bequeathed to the new foundation, and that even then the scholars were supported by the congregation; but charity is never poor. He himself drew up the rules for the direction of the youths in the Nazarene College, and wrote them with his own hand; they are the same that are still preserved and venerated there. On the day already named, he, with great joy and tenderness of soul, gave the habit prescribed in his rule, to eight of the scholars, before the altar of the domestic oratory at S. Pantaleo, after which he conducted them, together with four religious appointed to take charge of them, to the Tonti palace, where everything had been suitably arranged for a college, of which he himself was the first superior. Such was the auspicious beginning of the Nazarene College, of which Joseph Calas Sanctius is recognized as first head, legislator, and father. This college was ever an object of most affectionate care to him, and he took care to insure that it should not prove useless either to Church or state. In the following year he admitted more scholars, of whom the first was Don Pietro Cesis, son of Don Gianfederigo, duke of Acquasparta.

Some Florentine noblemen seeing how useful the Pious Schools were in Rome, felt anxious to have them at Florence: they conveyed their

representations to the court, where the Grand-duchess (dowager of Austria) undertook to represent the case to her son, the Grand-duke, Ferdinand II., then a minor. He having been acquainted with Count Gasparo Scioppio, in Milan, a very prudent man, and one of the state councillors, he thus wrote to the Grand-duchess, under the date of March, 1630: "I hear with great satisfaction that your serene Highness is pleased to assist and favour the religious of the Pious Schools, judging, as do all men of prudence and talent, that this new religious order deserves to be appreciated by princes and states. I could wish it to be everywhere introduced, deeming it to be more useful to public and private welfare than can be expressed. I hope soon to join his Majesty the Emperor, to whom I shall not fail to suggest, that nothing would be more likely to facilitate the propagation of the Catholic faith, than the introduction of the Pious Schools," &c. On the 20th of the same month, the Grand-duke issued a favourable rescript, in consequence of which Calas Sanctius immediately despatched the necessary masters, one of whom, the celebrated Father Francesco Michelini, was appointed to teach mathematics. In the year 1636, he had the honour of being appointed teacher of mathematics to the young Grand-duke, Ferdinand and his brothers, the princes John, Charles, and Leopold. He was afterwards the successor of the great Gallileo in the mathematical chair of Pisa; in 1664 he published his work on the courses of rivers;



on which subject, no mathematician had as yet written anything to the purpose. Joseph strongly insisted upon his young religious giving much attention to the study of mathematics, in order that they might be qualified to teach the scholars in their turn. At that time the science was not taught in Florence by any other masters than those of the Pious Schools, as is evident from the following written testimony of the famous geometrician Vincenzo Viviani, where he declares that "He took lessons from Father Clemente Settimi di S. Carlo, a priest of the Pious Schools, a man most estimable both for learning and goodness; he being at that time the only one who taught this science; that he had been the pupil of Father Francesco Michelini di S. Giuseppe, of the same order, who was giving lessons in mathematics to the young princes; that he was afterwards public lecturer at Pisa, and the author of that talented work 'On the courses of rivers,' published under the name of D. Famiano Michelini."

The fame of the Pious Schools spread from Rome into the provinces, and from thence into the remotest parts of Europe, insomuch that Joseph was urgently solicited to send some of his religious to several different places. An impostor, who styled himself Matteo Massimi, and who had already been expelled from a celebrated religious order, found means to take advantage of the favourable opinion of the public in behalf of the Pious Schools. He carefully informed himself of the customs of the institute, and pro-

cured a copy of the constitutions ; he next made out a false patent, appointing himself vicar and commissary of the order ; then putting on the habit, with a companion similar to himself, he passed over into France, and introduced himself to several bishops and noblemen, and finally to Cardinal Richelieu himself. He began his course of fraud in 1626, and continued it at intervals till 1632. Under pretext of establishing foundations, Matteo contrived to deceive many persons, from whom he moreover obtained large sums of money. He next proceeded to Spain, where he played the same game ; and having amassed a handsome fortune, he took it into his head to return to Rome and enjoy himself. When Joseph was informed of these proceedings, he was deeply pained, not only for the discredit which might be cast upon the whole order, but much more so for the offence against God, and the danger of the misguided impostor. Amongst the many who had been imposed upon by him, was Cardinal Francesco Barberini, who was returning to Italy from Spain, whither he had gone as the representative of his uncle, Pope Urban VIII., who was sponsor to the daughter of Philip III., King of Spain. His Eminence had admitted the feigned commissary into his retinue out of regard for Calas Sanctius, and they travelled together from Barcelona to Civita Vecchia, the Cardinal, in the meantime, treating him with all favour and distinction, but when informed of the imposition, he was resolved not to allow such transgressions to pass with impunity. He gave orders that

strict search should be made for the rogue, who, when apprehended, was thrown into prison, and after his trial, was sentenced to the galleys for life. Fortunately, however, for him, Joseph was the person whom he had principally wronged and injured ; and he could recognize no offence, unless it were accompanied by pardon and beneficence. He employed such urgent entreaties with Cardinal Barberini, in behalf of the culprit, as to obtain a commutation of the sentence ; and the punishment of the galleys was changed into exile : vain, however, is the expectation of gratitude when a rogue is in question. On being expelled from Rome, Matteo directed his steps to Germany, where he repeated his frauds with admirable success ; he next proceeded to Venice, and from thence to Naples, where he was again arrested by order of the Cardinal-archbishop, who had had some intimation of the character of the man. Joseph again interceded for him, and again was his punishment limited to exile. Not long afterwards, the impostor again appeared on the stage, but being discovered by the Bishop of Alba nel Monferrato, he disappeared, growing weary of his trickery before he could tire out the patient forgiveness of Calasanctius.

To these trials, which are sensibly felt even by saints, was added a dread of the pestilence which was then ravaging Italy. He charged all his religious with extra works of piety, in order to appease the Divine wrath, and exhorted them to prepare for death. He was highly gratified

when he heard that the religious whom he had recently sent to Florence, had willingly offered themselves as victims of charity to serve the pestiferous ; an offer which had been gladly accepted by the city and its sovereign. Our Lord was pleased to preserve them from the contagion into which they had thrown themselves for the benefit of their neighbour. In the same manner did the holy man rejoice when Father Melchiorre Alacchi devoted himself to the service of the inhabitants of Venice when attacked by the plague ; and he seemed to envy the death of some of his other children who took the infection from the poor creatures they attended on. He himself little knew how much his merits contributed to the preservation of others. Giovanni Ferrer had the highest opinion of Joseph's sanctity, and always kept his letters as precious relics : when the pestilence broke out in his neighbourhood, he began to provide for the safety of himself and children ; for this purpose he carefully folded up these letters, and fastened one upon his own neck, and one upon the neck of each member of his family, saying to them, "Children, be of good heart, confide in the merits of this servant of God, and no harm will befall you." His house not only escaped the fearful contagion, but even every sort of minor malady.

In the year 1631 Almighty God afforded our saint a sweet consolation. Cardinal Dietrichstein, prince-bishop of Nicholsburg, filled his heart with joy, by writing him an account of the great good which the fathers of the Pious

Schools were effecting in those parts. He had confided his seminary to them, but their edifying conduct, zeal, and toil, were not confined within so narrow a compass. Vienna, Breslaw, Troppau, and Strasnitz, wished to benefit by their labours; his Eminence, therefore, entreated him to send more workmen, and thus satisfy the general desire; similar intelligence reached him from other quarters. Could greater delight than this have been conferred upon a heart solely intent on promoting the glory of God and the salvation of his neighbour? A harvest so abundant, required a greater number of workmen than his new-born order could afford to spare; this paucity of members mortified his ardour and pained his heart. Moreover, God would make trial of his resignation, by depriving him of some of his most promising subjects, whom He summoned to Himself by premature death; the loss most severe to the soul of Joseph, was that of Sebastiano Centurione, a professed cleric. He was endowed with clearness of intellect, an angelical disposition, unsullied conduct, and fervent zeal for the salvation of others. At the age of seventeen, despising the grandeur of his illustrious house, he made himself poor for the sake of Jesus Christ, putting on the habit and joining the institute of the Pious Schools. Joseph placed him under the care and guidance of a man of God, Father Gian-Stefano Spinola, his fellow-townsmen. Following the footsteps of the venerable Glicerio Landriani, he soon attained perfection; but being called by God

to the seat of the just, he left his religious brethren the bitter regret of his loss, and the sweet odour of his sanctity. We must not silently pass over a remarkable circumstance connected with this subject. At this very time Joseph had three of his religious in a dying state in the house at Frascati; the above-named Centurione, and Fathers Garzia and Bandoni; he restored the two latter instantaneously to health, even informing them beforehand of the Divine mercy in store for them; but with regard to the first, he did nothing more than express his regret for his illness, and give the requisite orders for the disposal of his body in the event of his death. These surely are certain secret mysteries, only intelligible to those whom Divine Wisdom deigns to illustrate.

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## CHAPTER VII.

HE IS DECLARED GENERAL FOR LIFE. ENTERS THE TOWN OF NORCIA WHEN THE GATES WERE SHUT. HIS ORDER IS DEMANDED IN DIFFERENT PLACES.

THE nine years of the generalship of Calas Sanctius, the term prescribed by Gregory XV., expired at the end of April, 1631, when, according to the constitutions, a successor for life was to be elected, unless he himself should be confirmed in the office. As the pestilence was by no means extinct in Italy, it was deemed impossible to assemble a general chapter as yet,

and the meeting was consequently deferred for six months. Joseph ardently sighed for the time, when, divested of all the cares of government, he should be at liberty to serve God as a private religious. At the end of the six months, affairs wore the same unfavourable aspect; under these circumstances, the religious, then in Rome, presented an appeal to the Pope, beseeching him to issue a brief, declaring their founder general in perpetuity; and thus do, by an act of pontifical authority, what the chapter would undoubtedly do, if it had been possible for it to assemble. Calasactius was the only one from whom this petition was kept secret; it was concealed from him, because it was well known how vigorously he would have opposed the measure.

His Holiness, who duly appreciated the merits and virtue of Joseph, judging the request to be useful, just, and prudent, issued a brief on the 12th of January, 1632, constituting him general for life, and assigning him four assistants, who were to be elected by the chapter. The saint was astounded at the news, which was not imparted to him until it was too late to hinder the appointment, therefore, he bowed his head to the dispensations of God, as announced by the mouth of His vicar.

He judged it advisable for the maintenance of regular observance, to make a visitation of some houses of the order, situated at no great distance from Rome. He arrived late in the evening at Norcia, where the Pious Schools were situated near the city walls. The companion of the Saint



called as loudly as he could, entreating the people to come and open the city-gates if possible ; the religious answered from the windows of their house, that this could not be done without applying to the governor, to whom they would hasten as quickly as possible. "At least open the church door," rejoined the Saint, "that we may go in and pray in the interim." The religious were in no hurry to open the church, knowing it to be of no use until the governor had sent the keys of the city : the door of the church, however, was opened before the arrival of the keys, when to the utter astonishment of the fathers, they found the Saint and his companion on their knees before the Blessed Sacrament : they thought it must be an illusion, they looked at each other in mute amazement. When Calas Sanctius had finished his prayer, he encouraged them always to place their trust in God, and strictly forbade them to mention a word of what had happened ; but the witnesses were too numerous to expect obedience from all, especially when the breach of it did not appear to them in the light of a defect ; besides, what excuse (other than the truth) could be made to those who brought the public keys ? the miracle was soon spread through the city, when the inhabitants eagerly pressed in crowds to visit him ; in consequence of which he quickly and secretly departed, proceeding to Narni, from whence he returned to Rome.

The sons of Calas Sanctius, thanks to the divine mercy, and to the admirable direction and example of their father, gained such credit to them-



selves, and everywhere laboured so indefatigably, that the Pious Schools acquired the highest reputation, and were called for in many places. The Saint was overwhelmed with letters from princes, cardinals, bishops, and magistrates: these are still preserved, and their number, description, and earnestness, would surprise any one who should see and read them. There seemed to be a general feeling of esteem and regard for the new order, arising in Sicily, Naples, the Pontifical States, Tuscany, Lombardy, Piedmont, in Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, and throughout Germany; in the last-named country, the sons of Calas Sanctius laboured especially, not only in the education of youth, and other holy functions, for the service of the Catholics, but devoted themselves most zealously to the conversion of heretics; nor did our Lord omit to shower down blessings on their toil and zeal. "If I had ten thousand religious at my command," wrote the Saint to Father Melchiorre Alacchi, "I could disperse them all in a month's time through those countries where they are so urgently asked for;" and a little further on, when speaking of Bohemia and Moravia, he adds, "A church and convent are offered me at Prague, and in ten other places; together with the offer of whatever I might judge necessary; but what is of still more importance, the prospect of converting many heretics, who seeing us at work, and observing our mode of life, and our refusal of property, are in admiration, and entreat to be taught by us." However much Joseph rejoiced at all this, as tending to the

glory of the Creator and the gain of souls, he was much afflicted at his inability to correspond with the obliging offers of so many illustrious persons, and with the well-known necessities of destitute youth. Before either his tongue or pen could give a negative, the necessity of refusing had deeply wounded his sensitive heart. Many people, moreover, were unwilling to yield to the reasons which compelled his refusal: when the desire of a great good amounts almost to a mania, we are apt to look upon real obstacles as mere chimeras. Cardinal Dietrichstein, as well as others, would not quietly submit to a negative so painful to his wishes and his zeal. This venerable old man wrote a long letter, dated 5th of May, 1633, to the Congregation "*de Propaganda fide*," in which he minutely details the abundant fruits gathered in his state and diocese by the sons of Calasancius, by means of their sanctity of life, learning, instruction of children, administration of the sacraments, preaching the word of God, gaining heretics to the Catholic faith, &c. He next expresses his regret at having been unable to obtain fresh recruits from Calasancius; and exhorts the Venerable College to insist on his sending more workmen into that evangelical vineyard; adding, that if their command was not powerful enough, they were to entreat his Holiness to use his supreme authority, and compel the general to comply. Were it not for the sake of brevity, I could, with great pleasure, have inserted this letter word for word; exposing, as it does, the zeal of this excellent Cardinal-bishop, the utility of the institute,

and the virtue of the sons of Calas Sanctius ; from all of which, we may guess how great must have been the heart-felt anguish of such a father, when he beheld on the one hand so copious a harvest, and on the other, so sad a scarcity of labourers. The College of Propaganda deputed two of its members, namely, the Cardinal-vicar Marzio Ginnetti, and Cardinal Giovanni Battista Panfilì, to treat of the affair with the Pope and with the general. The latter could do nothing more than expose the restricted state of his order, as contrasted with the fulness of his own great heart ; nor could he do more than promise future succour : he spoke candidly, and convinced clearly. On the 13th of June, the congregation assembled in presence of the Pope, when the following decree was issued : “ After referring to Cardinal Panfilì, the letters received from Cardinal Dietrichstein, wherein he requests that more fathers of the Pious Schools should be sent to Moravia, these religious being so well received in those parts, not only by Catholics, but also by the heretics, of whom great numbers have been won over to catholicity by means of the said religious ; the Sacred Congregation considering, &c. &c. is of opinion, that Cardinal Dietrichstein should be informed that this order, having been but recently established, cannot, in consequence of the small number of its members, as yet send any more of its subjects into Moravia.” The Saint could not draw members out of nothing, to satisfy the wishes of other people ; though at that very time, his faith could draw a certain sum of money out of nothing,

when he wanted to assist an unfortunate individual ; and bread out of nothing, when he had to feed his own sons, left fasting in consequence of his own liberality to the poor.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### TRIALS, PATIENCE, AND MIRACLES OF JOSEPH.

BETWEEN the years 1633 and 1641, Joseph had to suffer from certain domestic disturbances. At the general chapter held in 1627, it was decreed that henceforth some members might be admitted to the habit and to profession in the rank of operative clerics ; they comprised such as were distinguished for character and talent, who were skilled in arithmetic or geometry, or who were sufficiently well versed in the first rudiments of grammar, to be qualified to act as masters, and teach in the lower classes : they were to content themselves with the tonsure and minor orders, without aspiring to the priesthood. The general of the time, however, had power to promote such of these to holy orders as he might deem worthy and competent of this dignity. The Saint was extremely reserved on this point, and admitted but very few : not so, were the provincials of Genoa and Naples ; and even as early as 1630, the general had reason to deplore their too great facility in this respect. He foresaw that too large a number of these religious would lead to confusion ; and so it proved, to his own deep

affliction: division of ranks in any community, is usually dangerous to public peace. Pride, so natural to man, presents continual temptations; those of low degree are ambitious to be on an equality with the higher; whilst these, on their side, are apt to look upon the others with disdain. Such of the operatives as were advanced to be clerics, soon aimed at being priests; they began to despise their proper offices; and in spite of the customs and rules of the order, claimed precedence over the clerics who were destined to the priesthood; thus renewing, under the eyes of Calas Sanctius, the same dispute for precedence, over which our Divine Redeemer sighed, when His apostles were contending for the first places. The taste for letters, which they had imbibed, inspired ambition; and an increase of numbers inspired audacity. But worse than all, their slender stock of learning, coupled with their deficiency in religious virtue, produced within them the monstrous combination of the pride of the learned, with the obstinacy of the ignorant. The ambition of these operatives simultaneously burst forth in several places. Upon Joseph alone, as holding the key which opened the door to their priesthood, fell the whole tempest of requests, remonstrances, and invectives. He stood firm in refusing the request of many; lest the precedent might lead to serious consequences. He had, the previous year, given his reasons in a letter to Father Alacchi, who had signified to him the wish of one of these operatives to be advanced to the priesthood:

although not deficient in capacity, learning, and merit, Joseph refused in these terms: "Having been at first clothed as a lay-brother, to make him a priest now, would be to compromise the order; because there are others, who, being fit for priests, or who not being fit, nevertheless aspire to be priests, would expect the same thing; and if we once allow this, it will soon be necessary to make them all priests."

The prudent firmness of the holy man, far from appeasing, only served to irritate the ambitious, who proceeded to action. Some sought to secure the favour of the great; some would pass over to other religious orders; some declaimed against the validity of their profession, and appealed juridically to the S. Congregation. The good sons of Calas Sanctius deplored these scandalous disturbances; they reproved the refractory and indocile; and compassionated their saintly old father, thus buffeted in all directions. He alone, full of resignation, humility, meekness, and hope, without discomposure, exhorted all to patience; and by his cheerfulness of countenance, gave proof of the calm virtue of his heart: he seemed the counterpart of his Divine Master, as described when sleeping amidst the tempest which so terrified His disciples. What weak minds look upon as affronts, he received as signal favours from the hand of God. All human events have two aspects, according as we look upon them, either with the eye of self-love (as we but too frequently do), or with the eye of religion, as we ought. It would be impossible to read the juridical de-

positions on this matter, without shedding tears of tender devotion ; so painfully does the insolence of the insubordinates contrast with the meekness and patience of Joseph : nor could we read without surprise and admiration, the many letters which he wrote at this time and on this subject ; most edifying instances of every virtue shine forth in them, and give us an exalted idea of the power of divine grace, which can thus despoil man of himself.

The forbearance of the saint was not confined to his letters, written as they were in moments of cool reflection, nor did it consist in maxims and words only ; it never shone forth more brilliantly than at the instant of attack. A few facts will prove this. Father Stefano Cherubini, superior of the house at Naples, unmindful of his own duties, had committed some essential irregularities. Tenacious, as Joseph ever was on the subject of regular observance, he felt himself bound to send a commissary to Naples, to investigate the matter on the spot, and institute a process accordingly. This was done, and Cherubini was declared guilty. His brother, Claudio, enjoyed the esteem, familiarity, and protection of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, nephew of the reigning Pontiff, partly on the score of his own deserts, and partly from regard to the memory of his father, the celebrated Laerzio Cherubini. His Eminence interceded with the general, in behalf of his friend's brother, Father Stefano, and obtained a cessation of the process ; that he should be removed from the charge of

superior, and quit Naples under some honourable pretext, which should screen his reputation in the eyes of the public. This brief account is not superfluous; for, besides being connected with the fact we are now exposing, it serves to explain the primary motive which led Stefano to play so conspicuous a part in the tragedy which will hereafter be unfolded in the course of our history. Before the public, then, Stefano made his appearance unpunished.

A Neapolitan operative-cleric, who aspired to the priesthood, went to Rome to prefer his claim. The Pope's brother, Cardinal Antonio Barberini, was then acting as pro-vicar, in place of Cardinal Ginnetti, who was absent on some legation. To him, and to the Vicegerent, did the brother present his memorial, full of calumny and invective against the founder. Amongst other falsehoods, it was affirmed that the general had no regard for justice, and gave, as an instance, the affair of Father Stefano, who had, in effect, been pardoned instead of punished. To attain their own ends, the perverse knew how to conceal the truth which justifies, substituting in its place, calumny which deceives. The cardinal, who was somewhat delicate and over zealous, immediately summoned Calasanctius, and at the door of the antechamber, which was filled with his friends and many other distinguished personages, he, with a vivacity corresponding to his zeal, loudly reprehended, mortified, and condemned the holy man. He knew nothing of the motive for which he had been summoned, but



the first glance at, and the first words of his Eminence, convinced him that he stood there as a culprit. As such, he immediately placed himself on his knees, modestly casting his eyes on the ground, and without a movement, and without uttering a syllable in his own defence, he meekly listened to the impetuous invectives of misguided zeal. Never was innocence better exculpated, than by that humble modesty and virtuous silence; the spectators looked one at another, and were edified to see a guilt so admirable, a guilt they would but gladly imitate. At the conclusion of the reprehension, the venerable old man arose, advanced towards his judge, thanked him for the correction, and humbly asked the favour of a private audience. The Cardinal, struck by the conduct of Calas Sanctius, felt moved to confusion and sorrow, willingly acceded to his request, listened to him like a father, discovered the atrocious calumny, and was exceedingly surprised to hear that the delinquencies of Cherubini had passed unpunished, in consequence of the influence and authority of of his nephew, Cardinal Francesco Barberini. Had the uncle, before he exercised his zeal, been cautious enough to seek correct information, Joseph would not have acquired this, so great merit of patience, nor would he have left us this brilliant example of it.

Another fact, in itself containing many, occurred as follows: Ambrogio Ambrosi, a youth of considerable talent, but wholly uncultivated, was admitted by the saint, as an operative-

cleric; he was instructed in the Latin tongue, and was taught mathematics, in which he made considerable progress. The saint was able to send him, on respectable terms, to teach the latter at Nicholsburg, and afterwards to Florence, where he acquired such reputation, as to be appointed master to the young princes, John Charles and Leopold. He taught them architecture, and Michelini, the other branches of mathematics. At the solicitation of these princes, the objections and usual cautions of the general were removed, and he permitted Ambrogio to be promoted to holy orders; but the sacred character, and formidable ministry of the priesthood, instead of rendering him humble, aroused within him an excessive arrogance. Who can be surprised at this? Pride and vanity, rather than a vocation, had conducted him to the altar. Repairing to Rome, he made it his employment, to insult, ill-treat, and deride the saintly founder, both before his face and behind his back, in public, as well as in private. Joseph could not but know and feel all these affronts, rendered doubly atrocious by the ingratitude of one who had been so signally benefited by him; and by the audacity which could prompt a subject to act thus towards his superior. Notwithstanding all this, he incessantly endured, incessantly pardoned, and incessantly prayed to our Lord for the salutary amendment of his wayward son.

The more the malice of men sought to vilify him, the more did the right hand of God exalt him, and the more did good men revere him:

The latter were constantly on the watch, to procure some poor article or other of which he had made use, to preserve as relics, and employ in their most pressing emergencies. By throwing some of his hair into the waves, and invoking his name, a violent storm was allayed, at the moment it threatened the destruction of Father Vincenzo Berro, with four of his companions and a great number of passengers.

By the same means a hurricane was subdued in the gulf of Salerno, when Father Domenico Leuci and two of his companions saw St. Philip and Joseph, whom they invoked, convey safe and dry to the ship, one of the sailors named Andrea, who had fallen overboard in the storm about half an hour before. Luca Simoni saved himself and the pilots, somewhere off the coast of Gallipoli, by exposing to the furious waves a letter written by Calas Sanctius to his master Monsignor Pappacoda, Bishop of Lecce, and which he had entreated the loan of by way of security on his journey. A fire broke out in S. Pantaleo, which was extinguished by Joseph's merely desiring one of the priests to make the sign of the cross over it.

Brother Domenico Vincenti was about to have his hand amputated, which was already half destroyed by cancer. Joseph touched the hand, and it was instantly freed from both pain and loathsomeness.

The Marquis Bernardino Biscia, Father Archangelo Sorbini, the canon, Silvestro Manfredi, Father Pietro Bersanti, and on two different oc-

casions, the lay-brother, Lorenzo Ferrari, were all reduced to the point of death, when the saint visited them, and cured them.

By the application of his relics with lively faith and hope, death was driven from the bed-side of Don Francesco Gioffreda; of a poor woman residing in a village between Bari and Molfetta; and of a youth in Palermo, dreadfully bruised by falling from a height.

Our Lord was not less liberal in bestowing on him a knowledge of future events. He predicted male succession, with the peculiar circumstances connected therewith, to Christopher Tucinski, and to Count Branciforte of Ragarmuto. He announced the speedy death of Father Diomede Antoniucci, and the Marquis Francesco Biscia, at the time they were both in perfect health. He ordered two of his religious, who had remained out in the town all night without leave, to go into the infirmary and prepare themselves for illness and for death; they died on the third day, the one three hours after the other.

The Prince of Ventimiglia, then at Palermo, wrote a letter of importance to Calas Sanctius, entrusting it to the care of Captain Francesco Sbarra, who was on the point of starting for Rome; just before sailing, Sbarra took up the letter (as he supposed) from the little table on which he had placed it; but on examination found that he had in mistake taken a letter directed to the prince; his search for the former was in vain, he returned to his highness, acknowledged the loss, expressed his regret, and requested he would

write another letter, to the same purport as the former ; presenting at the same time the other letter which he had found upon his table, though he could not possibly tell how it had been placed there. On opening it, we may imagine the surprise of the prince, when he found it was an answer from Calasanctius, who had replied, point by point, to every article contained in the letter directed to him at Rome, and which the captain believed himself to have mislaid. Both were astounded at the miracle, and hastened to the Cardinal Archbishop, Giannettino Doria, and juridically deposed to the fact. A similar miracle had occurred three years before to Father Alacchi, in Messina, and to D. Giovanni Rosa, who had taken charge of a letter of importance to Joseph in Rome. For the sake of brevity, I must omit a great number of other prodigies wrought by the saint about this time, contenting myself with the relation of one more than usually wonderful, which is still remembered and admired by the grateful inhabitants of Frascati. The wife of Don Blasi, one of the chief residents there, fell asleep whilst in the act of nursing her infant son, and unfortunately smothered him ; on awaking, she perceived at once both her loss and her fault ; horror and grief came with full violence upon her, and her incessant tears, groans, and lamentations, manifested the fearful tempest which was raging in the heart of the despairing mother ; her very despair, which made her willing to grasp even a shadow of hope, brought to her mind the recollection that Jo-

seph happened to be then at Frascati, whose merits and miracles were well known to her. Without losing a moment, she pressed the corpse of her precious babe (the victim of her imprudent neglect) to her bosom, and flew with it to Joseph, into whose arms she placed it, and terrified, exhausted, and weeping as she was, she cried out aloud in the phrenzy of her grief, "O Joseph, restore my son to life!" Charity, compassion, and faith, were immediately awakened in the heart of Calasanctius; these, however, were opposed by his humility; compassion triumphed, but in such a manner that humility had no reason to complain. He led the afflicted mother to the church, before a miraculous image of our Blessed Lady; he then summoned a troop of innocent children from the school, whom he bade join him and the other people assembled there, in singing the *Salve Regina*; beseeching the Mother of mercy to obtain the desired favour. He held the dead infant in his arms the whole time, in the attitude of offering him to Mary, to whom and to Almighty God he addressed that secret language familiar only to the saints. Everybody prayed, and throughout that crowd there reigned an anxious respectful silence, and a lively expectant hope; the babe was the first to break the solemn silence; by tears and movement, it gave signs of life; the Saint intoned the hymn of thanksgiving to God, which was joyously and clamorously re-echoed by the people, who cried out, "A miracle! a miracle!" "Yes," added Joseph, "it is one of our Blessed Lady's

miracles, who often performs greater even than this." He took advantage of this incident to exhort them to a tender devotion to the Queen of heaven, and then sent the children back to school; the mother returned home with her infant in her arms, as full of happiness at the restoration of her treasure, as she had previously been plunged in grief by the bitterness of her loss. Joseph almost immediately quitted Frascati, driven away by his modesty, because the citizens gave him to understand that they attributed the wonderful resuscitation to him. Such was the holy man who, at the very time that Almighty God was thus distinguishing him, was despised and afflicted by the turbulent and ambitious. What a prodigy of blindness and malice is man!

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## CHAPTER IX.

THE SAINT'S ENDEAVOURS TO APPEASE THE TURBULENT.  
HIS CONSOLATIONS IN THE CONVERSION OF HERETICS, &c.

THE trials and tribulations in which the Saint was involved by the pretensions of the operatives, exercised his patience, but did not render him timid, negligent, or indolent. To provide for the safety and peace of the order which he had instituted, he employed the means dictated by the spirit of prudence, assisted, as it ever is, by other Christian virtues. He opened the door,

and smoothed the path to those who sought to join other religious orders, he himself being well satisfied by their departure. He rejoiced at their being satisfied, and looked upon their removal as the purification of his own house. He stood out with zeal and firmness against those who sought to return to the world, under pretext of the nullity of their profession. This was an affair of the utmost consequence, as, should these gain their object, one or other of two most dangerous shoals must be encountered; either the constitutions of the order, approved by the Holy See, were in opposition to the sacred canons, or, these unfortunate men would live in a state of perpetual sacrilege. Both one and the other assumption was injurious to the honour of God, and therefore called forth all the zeal of Calas Sanctius. The Pope, at his request, appointed a special congregation of prelates to examine the question, and pronounce sentence upon it, to be afterwards confirmed by pontifical authority. The decision was, "That the professions of the operatives, styled clerics, were canonical and valid." Before this, however, the axe had already been applied to the root of these disorders and disturbances. In October, 1637, a general chapter was called, at which Joseph with his four assistants were present, together with all those who lawfully had voices therein, belonging to the six provinces, of which the order was then composed; namely, Rome, Genoa, Naples, Tuscany, Germany, and Sicily. By a perpetual decree, confirmed by apostolic authority, the rank



of operative-clerics was utterly abolished and destroyed, after having disturbed the order and its ruler so unsparingly. In 1641, a new formula for the profession of the lay-brothers was adopted, wherein they solemnly promise Almighty God never to aspire to any post for which they are unsuited: this wise arrangement was confirmed by Pope Urban VIII.; and completely put an end to the hurricane raised by ambition. Cardinal Alessandro Cesarini contributed much towards calming these disturbances: he had a great regard for the institute, and the highest veneration for the sanctity of Joseph, at whose solicitation he had been appointed protector of the Pious Schools by his Holiness. The anguish endured by Calas Sanctius in the course of the proceedings above alluded to, was softened from time to time by the sweet consolations of God. He received the most gratifying accounts from Bohemia and Moravia, of the progress of Catholicism through the exertions of his sons. Our Lord deigned to bless their ministry by enabling them to lead many Jews to the bosom of the Church, besides a prodigious number of heretics. The accounts which were forwarded to the Saint, corresponded exactly with those which were sent to Cardinal Cesarini, and to the college de Propaganda fide, on which those religious workmen depended. The town of Tirnholt with all its adjacent villages, Plerovia, eight boroughs in the district of Meissen, seventy-three noblemen, the inhabitants of Waldkirk, a rough and obstinate race, and many belonging to the neighbour-

ing territory abjured their errors, and embraced the true faith of Jesus Christ. In 1640 the fathers of the Pious Schools celebrated the festival of the glorious Saint Francis most triumphantly in the city of Leipsick: a troop of soldiers, consisting of one hundred and five men and three officers, approached the Holy Eucharistic table for the first time in their lives, having previously abjured both heresy and concubinage. It would be impossible to read, without shedding tears of pious joy, the letters written on that occasion to our Saint, by the noble Lord Francesco de Magni, of the territory of Strasnitz: we will give a short extract, as a sample whereby the reader may judge of the rest: "This city, this county, and the adjacent neighbourhood, might be called a nest, in which an endless brood of heretical sects were continually springing into life; I mean Calvinists, Lutherans, Picardians, Husites, Anabaptists, Atheists, &c.; whereas now, within a brief space of time, we see almost all of them converted to the one true faith, full of zeal and fervour," &c. The delight and extreme pleasure experienced by Joseph at this gratifying intelligence of the extension of the faith, exaltation of the Church, increase of divine glory, acquisition of souls, and zeal of his own religious, completely outweighed the anguish occasioned by the restless and ambitious. These successes, both in the reformation of Catholics, and in the conversion of heretics, were ascribed in the first instance to God; and next to the prayers and merits of the saintly

founder, who selected those Gospel ministers, and after imbuing them with his own spirit, sent them forth to battle for Jesus Christ. It was a subject of deep regret to him, that he should be unable to cross the mountains and win heretical souls to Jesus Christ; or else to shed his blood, as he desired, for the propagation of the faith.

The fame of these results, so glorious to the Church, united to the excellent culture of youth, was not limited to Bohemia and Moravia; it extended to other northern provinces and kingdoms; in consequence of which, many princes made strong endeavours to establish the Pious Schools in their dominions. I might fill whole pages with a mere catalogue of their names: it will suffice to say, that Ladislaus IV. King of Poland, after having in vain solicited this through the vice-chancellor of the kingdom, and again through his secretary, wrote himself to Cardinal Cesarini, protector of the order, and to Calas Sanctius, letters breathing a most admirable spirit of piety and religion. The education of youth and the extirpation of heresy, especially in Pomerania, were the chief subjects of the pious monarch's anxiety, and guided by the experience of others, he judged there was no better means of attaining this double object than to employ the learned sons of Calas Sanctius.

## BOOK IV.

## CHAPTER I.

CHARACTER OF MARIO SOZZI. PERSECUTIONS AND  
TRIALS OF THE SAINT.

THE trials of Calas Sanctius, to which we have already alluded, would seem more than sufficient to verify the prediction made to him by Saint Teresa, as related in its own place; nevertheless, they were but the beginning of his troubles: now only does the scene open to unfold the sad tragedy of his sufferings. Hitherto, it was the ambition of others that chiefly pained his heart; he himself had not as yet been directly aimed at; but henceforth we shall see malice, falsehood, cabal, jealousy, and self-interest, forming a conspiracy for the oppression of innocence. Let us refer to the origin of all this. Mario Sozzi, a priest of respectable family, but of no consideration in Montepulciano, his own country, repaired to Rome, and from thence to Naples, in hopes of bettering his fortune. Although devoid of learning and integrity, he had considerable talent in the arts of deceit, turbulence, and artifice: natural eloquence and boldness rendered these vices as successful as they were dangerous; in a word, he seemed to possess all those

qualifications of perversity which God permits to exist in the world for the trial of the just. Seeing that the Pious Schools were gaining credit in Naples, this man thought it a good opportunity for the furtherance of his own designs; especially in the absence of more promising expectations. Although the profession, the habit, and the sustenance of the institute breathed nothing but poverty, he found therein somewhat to gratify, though not fully to satisfy, his ambition. Already had he in imagination reached the rank of superior, and concluded that in it his position would be less obscure, and not altogether uncomfortable. How flattering authority is to the ambitious! for though the command be only over poor men, it is still power over one's fellow creatures. Moreover, he calculated all that he might gain; ever ready to act contrary to reason, and without regard to remorse. He presented himself accordingly to the provincial of Naples, feigning a long and ardently cherished desire of embracing the institute: the provincial, who was a simple upright man, trusted his false countenance and words, and admitted him to the habit in May, 1630, although he had reached the age of forty. He carried his dissimulated piety through the whole term of his noviciate, and in due time contaminated his solemn profession by sacrilege.

Calas Sanctius by means of those lights which God occasionally vouchsafes to His Saints, enabling them to discern distant objects, was given to understand that a Judas had entered his order;

who, after striking the shepherd, would endeavour to disperse the flock. At the very time that Sozzi was admitted at Naples, (as was afterwards seen by confronting dates,) Father Vincenzo Berro entered the Saint's cell, and found him in deep affliction; venturing to inquire the cause, Joseph answered, "Ah! the Father Provincial of Naples is destroying my institute." Not long before this, he had cautioned that superior upon the subject of admissions, in consequence of a letter which he had received from Father Bosdraghi, the master of novices at Naples, who expressed himself in these precise terms: "Recommend our father provincial to be very cautious in giving the habit to novices, especially to such as are advanced in age." For the rest, Mario was wholly unknown to Joseph. The cause of all the mischief, and the substance of the prediction was understood afterwards; that is to say, when it became necessary to weep over its accomplishment.

As soon as he had made his profession, Mario felt that he no longer needed the cloak of deception, so he soon began to unveil the malice which had been resting at the bottom of his heart. Not only the local superiors, but even the Saint himself, by letter, found it necessary to charge him with restlessness, pride, and falsehood, as well as of infringing on his vow of poverty: they were continually obliged to change him from house to house, owing to the incessant complaints of his refractory conduct. Joseph at length summoned him to Rome, that he might have him under his own eye; but in November, 1639, he was

obliged to remove him for his misdeeds, by order of the Cardinal-protector. After admonishing him in the most paternal manner, (but in vain,) he sent him to Florence, where he only became worse, and as he was occasioning greater and greater evils, it was deemed expedient for the holy general to depute a commissary and enter upon a proper examination. Just at this time, however, a circumstance occurred which enabled Mario to withdraw from chastisement, and prosecute his delinquencies with impunity. A certain Faustina had privately established a heretical conventicle within the walls of a convent, of which she was the ruler. Mario by some means or other gained intelligence of this, and affecting great zeal and horror, hurried off to the Holy Inquisition to denounce it. This gained him great merit in the eyes of the venerable tribunal; and he was looked upon as a man devoured with zeal for the faith. This was a fine game won by his hypocrisy, which is never more powerful than when it can array itself in the garb of virtue.

Mario soon found means to profit by this favourable occasion. He went to Rome laden with rewards and the eulogiums of the Father Inquisitor of Florence, who warmly recommended him to the prelate-assessor of the Holy Office, that he might assist him in all his undertakings. Received as a hero by the assessor, he asked as his reward to be created provincial in Tuscany; to be withdrawn from all dependance on the general; to be furnished with the extraordinary

faculty of appointing all the superiors and all the officials in that province ; and, finally, to summon subjects from any house of the order to employ in the schools there, as he might judge fitting. Such an unreasonable request ought at once to have opened the eyes of any protector of upright mind, and have exposed the character of the hero : but through the authority of the Sacred Congregation he obtained all. No sooner was the perfidious creature invested with his new dignity, than he began to relish the pleasure of revenge, taking possession of it in the manner most insulting to the saintly old general who just before had intended to punish him as an offender. He succeeded in removing his secretary, who was of the greatest assistance to him in his decrepid state, and who was faithfully devoted to him : by Mario's contrivance he was sent to a house in Tuscany. The miserable man knew not that affronts and contumely were as precious to the servant of God, as the gratification of his revenge was sweet to himself. He soon afterwards repaired to Florence, where at a distance he continued to discharge his arrows against the innocent object of his fury. He dismissed at caprice the very subjects he himself had called for ; summoning others from elsewhere, precisely when their removal would cause most inconvenience : he did all this merely to throw the order into confusion, the general into affliction, and himself into a position where he could more easily calumniate him. In effect, he soon lodged an accusation before the Holy Office, to the effect that the gene-



ral opposed all his arrangements for the province of Tuscany, in contempt of the said congregation, which had caused him to be elected provincial. The prelate-assessor, prejudiced in favour of Mario, suspected no falsehood, and became more confirmed in the opinion that Joseph was a wrong-headed despicable old man: he went so far as to send a notary to him from the Holy Office, who, in presence of witnesses, was to reprove him for his pertinacy, and to inform him, "that he was, without reply, to send any one to Florence whom Father Mario should require, and this under grievous penalty, at the discretion of the holy Congregation." Full well was the accuser aware of the punctuality and submission of the Saint; we could easily prove this, by showing the letters he had received, written with his own hand, and filled with expressions of meekness, cordiality, and resignation: he might also have read the letters written by Calas Sanctius to his other spiritual children; but this would have turned to his own confusion, since in them he constantly inculcated obedience to Father Mario, whom he described as a charitable and discreet superior. But God was thus pleased to prepare events still more grievous, which were to fall upon His servant, and give the finishing stroke to his fortitude.

Mario's prosperity, however, experienced a check which mortified him greatly. His natural propensity, to intrigue, and turn everything to his own profit, made him insinuate himself even into the court. One of the ministers suspected

that he wanted to pry into state affairs, and one audacious piece of imprudence on his part, induced the Grand-duke to order his immediate banishment from Tuscany. This severe and heavy blow ought to have aroused him, and have led him to recognize the invisible hand that struck him: all things seem, however, to harden the reprobate. He immediately wrote a most calumnious note to the father-inquisitor of Florence, stating that the sovereign had exiled him from his dominions at the secret instigations of Calas Sanctius, who was thus seeking revenge both on him and on the Holy Office: he besought him, therefore, to intimate as much to the assessor in Rome, whither he was proceeding; and that he would entreat him to take his part and indemnify him. Upon this the inquisitor despatched a letter to Rome, full of invectives against Joseph, who was not only innocent but was even ignorant of the whole affair. The minister, whom duty made zealous for the honour of the Holy Office, immediately summoned Joseph to his feet, reproached and reprehended him with authority, and threatened him with grievous penalties, if he did not promptly obtain a revocal of the decree. The general was astonished to hear of Mario's banishment, and still more so to hear himself accused as the cause of it: with all humility he attempted to exculpate himself, and expressed his willingness to contribute as far as he could towards the return of the exile. His words, however, were not fully relied on. Mario, supported by the merit of his former

zeal, was looked upon as the truthful person ; as if one who discloses the impiety of another could not himself be impious ! On reaching Rome he found new pretexts for calumniating the Saint. On his journey he visited the houses of the order, that he might have the opportunity of playing the spy upon them ; but the religious resisted a visitation attempted by one who was alike devoid of the formalities required by the canons, and of the upright intentions which should influence a provincial. It suited Mario's purpose again to throw the blame of his expulsion upon the general ; the better to excite the compassion and exertions of the assessor. On reaching Rome he was listened to, caressed, and believed ; whilst Joseph who had had nothing to do with the banishment, was made out guilty of it, and of the order which refused to submit to the visitation of the exile.

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## CHAPTER II.

### IMPRISONMENT OF JOSEPH.

CARDINAL CESARINI, who from past experience knew Mario to be an evil-minded man, and had even ordered his removal from Rome, was astonished to hear of his return, and questioned Joseph as to the cause of it, and also as to the cause of his banishment from Tuscany. He answered that he knew nothing whatever on the subject of his guilt ; as, up to that time, he had received

no letters from the religious belonging to that province. The fact was, they were afraid to write, because Mario had forbidden them to write, and this on the score of his privilege of being independant of the general. The cardinal suspected that Mario intercepted the general's letters, and resolved to make (in quality of Cardinal-protector) an unexpected search through Mario's chamber, and thus clear up his doubts: he first sent his auditor, Count Corona, to apprise the general of his intention: at the first intimation of the plan, the Saint hastened to his Eminence, and besought him to refrain from a step which might lead to serious disturbances; especially when they considered the protection of the Holy Office so preeminently enjoyed by Mario. The cardinal answered, that he too was a member of that congregation, to which he certainly should offer no insult; and that he should carry his intentions into effect, in order to check the insolence of Mario. To this firmness of the protector, the Saint could only bow his head and exclaim, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

On the evening of the 7th of August, Count Corona, in presence of witnesses, executed the orders of the cardinal, to whom all the papers found in Mario's room were conveyed. Mario immediately wrote the following note to the assessor: "This evening father-general, the assistants, the procurator-general, and the secretary, have carried off all my papers belonging to the Holy Office; I inform you of it, that you

may adopt such measures as you deem expedient." The measures taken were precisely those which were most gratifying to the calumniator, and most meritorious to the caluminated. The misled assessor was inflamed with zeal, and early on the following morning hastened to the palace of the Holy Office, and issued a supreme order for the severe punishment of the offending parties. He then flew back to his own residence, and ordering out a troop of soldiers, dispatched them to S. Pantaleo, with orders to surround the house and church until he himself should arrive there. At the sight of these suspicious guards, people stopped to inquire the meaning of it all; various were the whisperings and surmises of the crowd: some were astounded, some conjectured, others invented; nobody could unravel the mystery; but all were confident some serious calamity was at hand. About an hour before mid-day the prelate appeared, descended from his carriage, entered the sacristy, and commanded the presence of the general: the saint was then on his knees in prayer, having just celebrated mass: he promptly obeyed the summons of the assessor, who, without waiting for the accustomed civilities, thus accosted him: "You are the prisoner of the Holy Office!" The assistants and procurator-general received the same intimation; the secretary, who was likewise presumed to be guilty, was actually at the altar saying mass; but as he had only proceeded as far as the Epistle, the prelate, who looked on him as being included in the order, called him from the altar,

made him unvest, and then desired they should all set out on foot to the palace and prisons of the Holy Office.

Without a word of reply, Calas Sanctius was obedient to the command; nor did he so much as send for his cap, that he might not detain the assessor. Preceded by two couple of his religious, (one of the assistants did not reside at S. Pantaleo, and another of them was ill,) he walked alone behind them, followed by the prelate in his coach, which closed the mournful procession. The accompanying circumstances contributed to increase the sufferings of the man of God. He was fasting from the morning of the previous day at the advanced age of eighty-six, walking about mid-day beneath a burning sun, his head uncovered, on the 8th of August, surrounded by clamorous guards, conducted by the longest path to the Piazza Pasquino, then through the frequented road of the Banchi, over the bridge of Saint Angelo, to the Holy Office, accompanied all the way by crowds of people, collected by surprise and curiosity. Calas Sanctius himself was the chief object of observation. Many of the lower orders, who knew nothing of him or of his sanctity, and who had no notion even of the common laws of humanity, followed him clapping their hands, shouting, and making other manifestations, usual only on such occasions as the execution of some notorious criminal. Their insolence deserved pity; they were prejudiced in favour of the most just and holy of tribunals. To own the truth the prelate

was a man of probity and of right intention ; his mistake was both unconscious and excusable. Those who were acquainted with Joseph and with the prelate, held their judgment suspended in equilibrium, in consequence of the virtues of the former, and the rectitude of the latter ; whilst those who know Joseph and not the assessor, at once suspected some odious plot of calumny. However, as the actions of the Saints are exposed for the edification of Christians, it becomes us to adore the Divine wisdom and bounty, which, by unforeseen events, knows how to exercise the virtue of His servants, and, for our humiliation, to change in a moment the aspect of worldly affairs. Joseph, after labouring so many years for the welfare of the public ; after having perpetuated his own love for the youthful poor ; after having filled the capital of the Christian world with the fame of his sanctity, already spread through Spain, Italy, Germany, and other parts of Europe ; after having restored the dead to life, given sight to the blind, freed those who were possessed with the devil, cured the sick of every sort of malady ; after having multiplied food for the famishing, sanctified monasteries, hospitals, and prisons ; after having frequently enjoyed the familiar visits of Angels and Saints ; after all this, we see him a man illustrious by birth, venerable for age and sanctity, the head and founder of a religious order, become the object of public scorn, and conducted with opprobrious solemnity to a common prison, as a malefactor and hypocrite, to be condemned, at a later period, to a pen-

alty proportioned to his presumed crimes. What an extraordinary combination of circumstances! The recital can scarcely be penned without shuddering, or be read without tears.

On reaching the Holy Office, the prisoners were left in the assessor's hall; he, after his dinner and siesta, again made his appearance, abused them in a transport of zeal, corresponding with their supposed guilt, exalted the merits of Father Mario, the atrocity of the persecution attempted against him, the insult offered to the Sacred Congregation, and then concluded in these words: "You shall not quit this place until you have restored all the papers you took away." Then it was that the prisoners understood the cause of their arrest. The saint, who had already placed himself on his knees to receive the reprehension, humbly answered, that the search made in Father Mario's room, had been the work of the Cardinal-protector, by means of his own auditor, and that neither he, nor any of those present, had had anything to do with it, either by demanding it, or by being present at it. The assessor was astonished and confounded at these words: he despatched a messenger to the Cardinal, who, when informed of what had occurred, deeply regretted having been the involuntary cause of these extraordinary proceedings. He immediately sent his auditor with one of his most magnificent carriages and a number of servants to justify Calasanctius and his innocent companions, and then to reconduct them to S. Pantaleo, through the very same streets they had



traversed a few hours before in so lamentable a plight. The assessor released them, but gave them to understand they were not at liberty to quit their own house for the space of fifteen days, assigning, as a pretext for this severity, their ill-usage of Father Mario.

Thus far we have compassionated the oppressions of the innocent, but we have not as yet sufficiently admired the fortitude with which he bore them, and of which the juridical witnesses examined in the processes gave ample testimony. He received the intimation of his imprisonment with cheerfulness and resignation. On the road from S. Pantaleo to the Inquisition, he submitted to this contumelious appearance in the midst of guards, to the scorn and derision of the populace, to the sufferings of fasting and old age, with constant meekness and joy—always serene, always tranquil; he owed to one of his confidential friends, that throughout the journey, his sole occupation had been meditation on his Divine Redeemer, betrayed by his own disciple, and dragged about from one tribunal to another, together with acts of sweet gratitude for being allowed the opportunity of tasting some small share of His sufferings. He modestly declined the offer of some restorative, presented by the worthy priest, Carlo Sinnibaldi, who followed him in tears. Whilst waiting in the hall of the assessor, his composure of mind, seconded by weariness of limb, afforded him the opportune relief of a refreshing sleep. As he was thus slumbering, one of the officials of the Inquisition,

and a young nobleman of high rank, stood gazing at him, when the latter exclaimed, "That is the face of saint, not of a criminal!" On reaching home with his companions, he expressly forbade them to raise any dispute with any one, exhorting them to thank the Lord for having conferred so signal a favour upon them. When people went, (as very many did,) either to condole or congratulate with him, his countenance was ever smiling, and his heart cheerful. He made it his duty to implore the pardon of God for Mario; and with regard to the prelate-assessor, he declared he had gained a new friend in the sight of God. Such is the revenge of the just! Only in one instance did Joseph express regret and affliction, and this was, when his innocence being discovered, he was conducted home, as it were, in triumph through the streets; he begged to return privately, but Count Corona insisted on following the directions given by Cardinal Cesarini. In the incident we have just related, how many passions were called into play on the one side, and virtues on the other! when all the circumstances are taken into account there are few Christian biographies that furnish its match; in it, the faithful may find much to admire and much to learn. Let us reflect that the innocent ought not to allow themselves to be dejected on the score of calumny, that it, and its consequences, if borne with humble resignation, become a favour; and, finally, let those who have to exercise authority be careful to examine their own prejudices, and

the reports of others, lest they render themselves guilty by the oppression of innocence, whilst they flatter themselves they are only exercising justice.

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### CHAPTER III.

FRESH CALUMNIES. APPOINTMENTS OF AN APOSTOLIC VISITOR. JOSEPH IS JUSTIFIED. A SECOND VISITOR IS NAMED.

MUCH as Mario was gratified by the humiliations and discredit thrown upon his saintly old father, he was not yet fully satisfied; he wished to see him not only mortified, but even crushed, and he began to devise means for effecting it. We have already related the fact of Joseph's being obliged to recall Father Stefano Cherubini from Naples, and deprive him of the charge of superior. But to save his reputation, and still more from a feeling of deference for Cardinal Francesco Barberini, he treated him externally with honour as far as he could, at least, until his repeated, notorious, and insupportable failings extorted some well-merited chastisement, even at the hands of our most meek Joseph.

Mario availed himself of Cherubini's dissatisfaction; he studied by artifice to exasperate him against the holy man; he then tempted, and, finally, overcame and gained him to his side. It cannot be denied, but that the acquisition of

such a man, whose feelings were already irritated, was nothing very desirable; however, the two conspirators, by cabal and stratagem, began to make it appear that Calas Sanctius was a silly old man, devoid of memory and judgment, and altogether quite unfit to govern; they, moreover, represented that the order was on the brink of ruin, owing to the incapacity of its head; and that his subjects made no complaint of this, because they found it more convenient to be governed by a general who was unable to keep them in check. The assessor, who, with rectitude of intention, had plunged into the depths of the deceit, supported their remonstrance; and on the 15th of January, a decree was issued by the congregation of the Holy Office, confirmed by the Pope, whereby Calas Sanctius was suspended from the generalship; all his four assistants were removed from the charge, and it was ordained that a regular should be appointed visitor-general of the whole order of Pious Schools, and that, in the meantime, no one should be admitted to the habit without the license of his Holiness and of the Sacred Congregation. Calas Sanctius received this intelligence with his usual fortitude, and with entire resignation to the Divine will. He could not, however, feel otherwise than acutely grieved, since he saw in this decree the fatal dispositions for the utter ruin of his order. Whilst Mario was endeavouring to contrive that the chosen visitor should be a man suited to his own malicious designs, the saint abandoned himself to continual prayer, invoking the patronage

of the Blessed Virgin, that the choice might fall upon a man of discernment and integrity; nor did he neglect the use of such human diligence as was dictated by prudence and rectitude.

The apostolic-visitor nominated by the Pope, was the very one whom Joseph wished; namely, Father Agostino Ubaldini, of the Somasca Congregation, a man distinguished for piety, wisdom, and learning. The selection did not please Mario, who dreaded nothing so much as integrity in the person who was to superintend the proceedings. He endeavoured, however, to render himself agreeable to him, the better to be able to impose on him, and so guide and direct him to suit his own purposes. Moreover, Mario found some difficulty in the choice of three of the assistants; for he was to propose them to the assessor, and the assessor to the Pope. With the exception of Stefano Cherubini, whom he intended to be the procurator-general, he could not, amongst all the religious of the order, find any who did not venerate the sanctity of Joseph, or who were not cordially attached to him. His only plan in this dilemma, was to nominate three simple, quiet men, whom, if he could not secure their favour, would not at least annoy him by any troublesome interference. Father Ubaldini opened the visitation at the beginning of March: the better to inform himself of the condition of the whole order, of the state of the different provinces, and other important matters, he held a long conference with the saint for upwards of four hours. The sagacious visitor

at once saw through the whole imposture. He was satisfied that Calas Sanctius was far from being the silly, incapable old man, which he had been represented; on the contrary, he was astonished at his prompt and distinct memory of everything that had occurred from the first institution of the order up to that moment, and highly admired his spirit of counsel, prudence, meekness, humility, and every other virtue: he found him deficient in nothing, except self-love. The visitor next heard in succession every one of the religious belonging to the three houses in Rome, in each of which he made his visit, and was much edified by the regular observance, the concord, and the universal esteem expressed towards the saintly founder. The informations which he received by letter from the provinces, corresponded exactly with the accounts already given him by Calas Sanctius. Fortunately too, just at this very time, letters arrived from Germany, conveying intelligence of the great progress of Catholicity amongst heretics, chiefly through the exertions of the religious of the Pious Schools. In a word, the visitor was fully convinced that Joseph was a saint, and a prudent saint too; that the order instituted by him tended to the glory of God and the public good; that the members were animated by the same spirit as their chief, with the exception of the two factious men, who in his estimation, were objects of abomination and scandal. In a public discourse which he delivered in the oratory at S. Pantaleo, in pre-

sence of them all, he, with religious sincerity, expressed these his sentiments, and protested that he was filled with consolation by what he had witnessed and admired. This discourse gave Mario and Cherubini to understand that the visitor had not been misled by any of their snares, but that he had poised innocence and iniquity in the balance of the sanctuary. They immediately assured the assessor that the visitor had been gained by Calas Sanctius, that he aimed at governing the whole order of Pious Schools, together with that foolish old man; and, therefore, that his information was not to be relied upon. Ubaldini became apprized of these insinuations against him; so for the sake of justice and of his own honour, he drew up a written statement, in which he declared that to the father-general, the government of the order ought to be confided, that the former assistants ought to be restored to their rank, and that the riotous and refractory (of which Mario was the chief) ought to be punished. He then consigned the document to the Sacred Congregation, and to show that his judgment was not based upon any undue motive, and being, moreover, a lover of peace, which he preferred to the bishopric of Avignon then offered to him, he renounced the burden and withdrew from the visitation. The good regretted his retirement, whilst the two perverse men rejoiced at it: without loss of time, they devised their schemes for securing a man of their own stamp to be the new visitor. Through the influence of the misguided asses-

sor they succeeded, and on the 9th of May the desired brief was expedited. God, who disposes of all things, and who by trial and tribulation purifies His Saints, permitted the new visitor to stray from the path of justice. By a hidden and divine judgment he became the head of a triumvirate, which conspired to oppress the brilliant innocence of the Saint, and make him drain the cup of bitterness to the very dregs; of a triumvirate which aimed at the utter destruction of the order he had founded. Facts so important and so extraordinary, could not silently be passed over without injury to truth, without diminishing the virtue and glory of the Saint, and without subtracting new motives of edification from our history, and from the pious reader.

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## CHAPTER IV.

FURTHER TRIALS OF THE SAINT. PLAN FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ORDER. DEATH OF MARIO.

THE new visitor promptly entered upon his office, and commenced his visitation to the three houses in Rome on the 10th of May, 1643. He expedited his circular to the whole order, on the 13th and 15th, and on the 17th he declared Cherubini procurator-general. Mario was the first assistant, and under the sanction of the visitor, he began to ill-treat and trample upon the saintly old founder. He took possession of, and open-



ed all the letters written either by or to him ; withdrew from him all the books of the order, shamefully taking from him that in which he noted down his most interesting memoranda : at the age of eighty-seven he deprived him of the person who assisted him in writing his letters ; forbade any one to go to him in his room, and dismissed great numbers from Rome, merely because their affection would not allow them to forsake him. In the midst of all this cruel treatment, never was a shade of discontent perceptible on the meek countenance of our saint, never did a syllable of murmur escape his lips. He knew how to respect the character of superior, even in the person of his tyrant, to whom he humbly and readily paid every mark of deference, to the admiration and astonishment of every one.

He never went out of the house without going to Mario to ask a blessing, which he always did kneeling, and to ask him to appoint his companion. On these occasions the traitor received him with supercilious arrogance, and after assigning him his companion, dismissed him with some opprobrious epithets, of which the most gentle were hypocrite, foolish, &c. He received him in the same manner on his return home ; but took care to examine his companion, as to his every step and word, in hopes of finding some pretext for further insult. Joseph, in composure of soul, blessed the Lord, and received all this ill treatment as a favour, and as a means of expiating his sins, as he used to say. A Roman prince sent him a hundred scudi to be employed in his own

defence ; without a moment's delay he carried the whole sum to his persecutor, though he well knew it would be spent in prosecuting himself : he requested Mario as a favour, to allow him a small portion of it for the purchase of a few pious pictures which the masters had asked for to be distributed amongst the poor children. Mario took the money, and with great reluctance gave Joseph a few pence for the specified purpose. Such were the fruits resulting from the appointment of the new visitor.

The three assistants, whose nomination Mario had procured, were upright, simple, quiet men, but not endowed with Joseph's virtue. They could not endure the sight of Mario's cruelty to their venerated father ; before the expiration of a month from their election, they openly expressed their detestation of the conduct of their colleague, separated themselves from him, renounced the charge of assistants, and thus washed their hands of the enormity of his guilt. Irritated at their integrity, and provoked at his inability to infuse any part of his own vile spirit into them, he entered the oratory like a fury from hell, when Joseph was praying there, and thus addressed him : " You doting old man ! you crazy old man ! these assistants wont obey me, and yet you do not compel them to do so ! I have all but ruined the order, and will never rest until I have completely uprooted it." Miserable man ! he knew himself to be perverse, but saw not the consequences of his perversity. Without a sign of discomposure, Joseph meekly

answered, "These men have been chosen by you; it was not I who gave them to you. Beware of the chastisements of God for the injury you are inflicting on the order. His indignation will soon fall upon you." This was a prophecy, as we shall soon see. When the assistants first tendered their resignation to the visitor, he endeavoured to pacify them with fair words, but on the second occasion, when they dwelt minutely on Mario's intolerable proceedings, he was furious, treating them as refractory members, rebellious against the Holy Office, and declared that he would have nothing more to do with them; and he kept his word. These perverse men continually protected themselves, by using the name of an incorrupt tribunal, and thus managed to keep the thread of their imposture unbroken. From henceforth, the visitor and Mario alone carried on the government of the order in this maimed and irregular manner; they alone decided on all its interests, for they had now no longer any witnesses of their iniquity. One of the artifices employed by the triumvirate for the destruction of the order, was to revive the turbulent pretensions of the operatives to the priesthood, their claims to precedence, and the pretended nullity of their profession. For the sake of fomenting these disturbances, Mario did not hesitate to load his soul with the guilt of simony, actually selling demissory letters to the operatives for their ordination. The visitor was not ignorant of this; Father Bandoni informed him of it by letter from Naples, but

he did not judge proper to stop the sacrilege, as these delinquencies suited his own purposes. From the former disturbances, he picked out a few seeds, small it is true, but sufficient for his object, as enabling him to suggest to his Holiness the expediency of appointing a special congregation to act with supreme authority, deliberate upon, and remove the existing abuses in connexion with the Pious Schools. The project was agreed to; the Pope nominated as members of this congregation, Cardinals Roma, Spada, Falconieri, and Ginnetti, with two prelates, namely, Monsignor Francis Paulucci, and the assessor of the Holy Office; by a most extraordinary and unusual oversight, the Cardinal-protector, Cesarini, was excluded; nor can this have been done without a meaning. He was well acquainted with the iniquity of the triumvirate: he venerated the sanctity of Joseph, and highly esteemed the order of which he was the protector. The visitor was the confidential friend of Cardinal Roma, the head of the congregation. He was the only one who spoke, he was the only one who gave any written statement on the question of the Pious Schools; but what appears still more strange, is, that from the first opening of the inquiry, the accused saint was never admitted to a conference. The first session was held on the 1st of October, 1643; the reader will scarcely believe us when we state the preliminary article proposed for discussion; this was, "Shall the Order of Pious Schools be utterly destroyed?" In truth, this would

only have been the final question, supposing the congregation had to deal with an order that had made open profession of libertinage, or that had contumaciously upheld some error of faith, or that had been guilty of some atrocious crime against the state. Yet such was the power of the visitor ; he had his own views, and whilst he flattered the ambition of Mario and Cherubini, he dexterously contrived to cheat them. Their object was to rule, not to destroy the body of which they were members ; they had no wish to return to the world, for they could easily have done this, had they thought they should find their own advantage in it. Thanks to the informations furnished by the visitor, who was presumed to be a man of probity, the majority of the congregation had prepared their votes for a fatal decision ; but Monsignor Paulucci opposed the measure with such energy, pleading the cause of reason and justice, of the respect due to the Apostolic See, of the public service, &c., that he drew over three of the cardinals to his opinion, and it was decided that the order should not be destroyed.

Calas Sanctius and his good sons had not expected to be so soon reduced to such straits, though they had heard it whispered that the object of the meeting was to bring about their destruction. As soon as the name of the visitor was promulgated, everybody prognosticated the depression of the saint and the ruin of the order ; this was not only inferred from the character of the visitor, but from the let-

ters which were written from Rome by his friends, who had themselves heard him express his intentions in familiar conversation. These reports were not only circulated in Rome, but were even written in letters to the Saint from Naples, Genoa, Strasnitz, Warsaw, where the fathers heard of them at court. The court of Warsaw was so certain of the project and schemes for the abolition of the Pious Schools, that the Grand Chancellor of the kingdom, the Duke Osselino, wrote in strong terms to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, beseeching him to avert such a blow; it will perhaps be well to quote his own words: "We, who have been moved by the good example and holy life of the fathers of the Pious Schools, are deeply afflicted to hear, that in consequence of the excesses of a small number of its members, the dispersion and dishonour of the whole order is intended. I know this institute to be most holy and necessary to the public. I cannot then do otherwise than warmly recommend these good fathers to your Eminence, together with the reputation and good name of an order devoted to the apostolic life; and entreat you to employ energetic measures against the guilty and seditious, especially those who, from ambition, seek to lacerate their own mother. I and others here, are particularly gratified to find that your Eminence is resolved to see the said order revived more brightly than ever, and am your Eminence's, &c., &c. I entreat your Eminence to pay particular attention to the scandals which naturally arise in these northern countries, by

the suppression of a religious order, which the heretics have hitherto held in such high estimation." King Ladislaus IV. wrote in similar terms to Cardinal Giulio Savelli, Protector of Poland, so we have evident proof that the visitor's intention really was such as we have stated. But to return to Mario.

One day at the beginning of August, he went to the Saint's cell with the intention of insulting him as usual; amongst other things he said to him with great bitterness, "I will give you so much to do that I will cause you to die in a prison." "It will be as God pleases," meekly answered Joseph; "would to God it might be so, that I might thus do penance for my sins! You have begun, but you will not finish." This was the second time within a short interval, that the Saint foretold the perverse man that the anger of God was near at hand. The prediction was but too truly verified. Scarcely had a year elapsed since Mario had been the cause of Joseph's disgraceful committal to the Holy Office as a prisoner, when he himself fell ill, and was covered from head to foot with a hideous leprosy: the pestiferous malady so completely seized him and devoured his flesh, that he had more the appearance of a skeleton than of a human being: he called for a looking-glass, and was himself horrified at beholding his own frightful image. So insupportable was the stench which issued from his body, that his most intimate friends could not endure it, even those who were engaged to attend upon him fled away. Every remedy was tried but in

vain. "To ordinary complaints," writes one of the physicians, "we can oppose a remedy; but when the maladies are sent by God, then we can find none." As soon as Calas Sanctius heard of the illness of his miserable son, he hastened, decrepid as he was, to the noviciate where Mario resided to visit him, and regularly sent some of his religious every day to inquire after him, but neither he nor the others were ever admitted; on the contrary, they were generally excluded in a very uncivil manner. Castellani, formerly physician to Pope Gregory XV., was requested to visit him, as if of his own accord; but because the sick man knew him to be the friend of Calas Sanctius, he positively refused to receive him. Notwithstanding all this, the saint still continued to call and send, and sought to help him by his prayers. He entreated all the religious at S. Pantaleo to offer up their daily works of piety for the salvation of Father Mario, and desired the priests to add the collect in the mass, "Pro infirmo," whilst he himself was incessantly imploring the favour of the Most High in his behalf. When the doctors pronounced the case hopeless, the holy man groaned over, and lamented his inability to comfort and win him back to our Lord, for Mario still obstinately refused to admit him. He therefore sent the venerable Father Pietro Casani to him. Mario had still some remnant of esteem for him, although he was one of the four assistants whose dismissal he had procured. The wretched leper, abandoned as he was by all his friends, who were unable to endure the foetid



odour of his flesh, admitted this, his holy enemy, who was willing to stay with him out of pure charity. In the meantime Joseph caused the Blessed Sacrament to be exposed, and ordered all his religious to pray for the amendment of the dying man: up to the moment of his death, he daily remained prostrate in prayer and tears, to obtain the salvation of this guilty soul: such was the sweet revenge of Calasanctius! Casani endeavoured with apostolic zeal to rouse Mario and dispose him for a Christian end; but his heart was turned to stone. He certainly had some misgivings about the injuries he had inflicted on the holy man, because he gave this formal commission to Casani: "Tell father-general to pray to God for me, and that if I have offended him I ask his pardon." When the saint was informed of this, he raised his weeping eyes to heaven and said, "I have already forgiven him, and I implore nothing else of our Lord than that He will give him contrition at least at the last moment." The unfortunate man did not, however, strive to merit this. Even when reduced to extremity he could find that in his heart which prompted him to try and perpetuate the afflictions of Joseph even after his death, which otherwise would probably have been, in great measure, put an end to. He requested a visit from the assessor and the visitor, to speak to them, as he said, before quitting this world, on an affair of importance: they both went to see him, but were able to remain with him a very short time, in consequence of the intolerable odour. They might

have profited by those few moments, beholding, as they did, the fearful spectacle of Divine vengeance in that appalling face. He thanked them for having favoured him with their protection, and entreated them to use all their endeavours to have Cherubini appointed to succeed him in his office; they promised him they would, and were faithful to the promise as will be seen later. Having, as we have already said, beheld his disfigured countenance in a glass, he desired that his body should not be exposed in the church after his death, but that it should at once be inclosed in a coffin. The unhappy man died on the 10th of November, at the age of fifty-two: he had been professed twelve years, though without ever having been a religious in the true sense of the word.

The reader will scarcely wonder that I speak of the illness and death of Mario, as being the chastisement of God. I should not thus have ventured to interpret the divine counsel, if I had not examined the opinion of the physicians, the juridical testimony of the processes on the virtues and merits of the saint, and the trustworthy attestation of Cardinal Alessandro Crescenti; all tending to the belief, that the anger of God falling on the head of Mario, authenticated the innocence of Calasanctius.

## CHAPTER V.

CHERUBINI SUCCEEDS MARIO. REMONSTRANCES OF THE RELIGIOUS. FALSEHOODS OF THE VISITOR. THE SAINT SUCCOURS AND OBEYS HIS ENEMY.

THE visitor kept his word. The day after the death of Mario, he sent a circular letter to all the superiors of the order, informing them "That the congregation of cardinals, negotiating the affairs of the Pious Schools, had appointed, in place of Father Mario, Father Stefano Cherubini, degli Angioli, to be the sole and universal superior of the whole order, to whom all obedience is to be rendered," &c. We may observe in passing, that in fact, the visitor's arbitrary decision was unjustifiable, because the congregation had not been assembled. Its acts still exist in our archives, and there is not a word about this assembly in them: finally, the said congregation possessed no such power. The religious of Rome and of all the provinces, who had flattered themselves with the belief that the generalship would be restored to their saintly father on the death of Mario, loudly complained of this new command. They could not endure to see innocence still crushed beneath the yoke of oppression; or that a notoriously, perverse, scandalous, and discredited man should be placed at the head of the order. The visitor expected this opposition, which wounded and gave him the lie, because he was well aware of the spirit of

unanimity which reigned throughout the order. Murmurs, remonstrances, resistance on the score of invalidity, and universal protestations of refusal to acknowledge as superior a man who intruded himself upon the government without legitimate authority, and with no other claim to it than that of his vices, sprung up in all directions. Joseph, who in his inmost heart deplored the devastation of his beloved vineyard, was the only one who was silent. He prayed much, but the visitor believed Cherubini so well suited to the furtherance of his views, that he persisted in supporting his pretensions: moreover, Cherubini thought he should gain credit to himself if he imitated the haughty conduct of Mario, by insulting and subduing the meek old man, to whom all his religious were so strongly attached.

The visitor was well aware of the injustice as well as the difficulty of his undertaking, and thought it would be prudent to use a little cunning sweetness, that he might not lose a point of such interest to himself. He attempted to obtain his recognition by the religious of Rome, and then hoped to draw still further advantage from their example: accordingly, he one day accompanied Cherubini to S. Pantaleo, formally assembled the religious family, made a pathetic discourse on obedience and peace, and exhorted them all, by an act of Christian humility, to acknowledge Father Stefano Cherubini for their chief; solemnly promising that if they did so, father-general should soon be restored to the

government. But no one relied on his fair words and promises; and though the expression of Christian virtue dwelt on his lips, these sentiments were judged to be foreign to his heart. He had so often proved himself guilty of falsehood and deception, that people could not in a moment bring themselves to a change of opinion: the religious all held firm. The oldest and most virtuous were quiet; the younger ones uttered some whispered threats. The visitor thought it best not to bring his authority to the trial, so prudently withdrew, leaving Cherubini to encounter the first outbreak of the storm, alone. Being thus abandoned, he felt all the confusion, shame, and fear, that conscience will sometimes inflict on the wicked; therefore, to escape insult and reproach, he sought security in flight; but whither could he go? The saint was alone in his cell, near to the Oratory; thither flew the trembling Cherubini, who, throwing himself at the feet of Calas Sanctius, implored his succour and protection. Joseph, like a tender father, immediately embraced him, raised him from the ground, encouraged him, and taking him cordially by the hand, reconducted him to the Oratory. Here he addressed them all in favour of his enemy, exhorted them to make the great sacrifice, and would be himself the first to make a public promise of a subject's obedience and submission to an ungrateful son: the tumult and opposition ceased in a moment; every one was moved to tenderness by this humility, meekness, and charity of the good father,

and they followed his example, as a tribute of respect to him, rather than from a sense of conviction, it must be owned. Thus then, through the generous virtue of Joseph, Cherubini obtained what the political insinuations of the visitor had been unable to effect. The perverse intentions of this man were so generally understood, that all the provinces of the order did not hesitate to complain of his conduct towards the congregation. He drew up a long letter in form of manifesto, where he endeavoured to clear himself, and sent a copy of it to all the houses of the order. The religious immediately answered this apology, and proved evidently that his actions belied his words;—that he aimed at the destruction of the institute;—that he was leagued with Cherubini to crush the saintly general, who, through the course of nine months, had not once been admitted to a hearing;—that they believed the report spread abroad, to be too true, namely, that he intended to have Cherubini declared vicar-general. The visitor had denied all this in his apology of the 7th of February, wherein he says, “Up to the present day I have never even thought of such a thing, neither has Father Stefano ever aspired to, or sought to procure it.” Nevertheless, he had actually a brief in his possession, dated the foregoing November, in which his Holiness had appointed Father S. Cherubini general; a brief of which the said visitor availed himself when he thought proper to oppress Calas Sanctius. He was also convicted of having sent ostensible orders to

Cagliari, in which contradictory or falsified dates were detected; and, finally, they declared that his friends would not venture to circulate the report of his intention to destroy the Pious Schools, if they had not received the information from himself. The visitor thought it best to offer no reply to all this, yet he would not abandon his enterprise.

In the following August the mysterious object of the brief in favour of Cherubini and the visitor, was unveiled. Copies of it were sent out of Rome by the latter, who required that the former should be recognized and obeyed as vicar-general by the whole order; but as yet the brief had not been shown in Rome. In the name of the congregation, Joseph was desired to order its acceptance, although it was neither published nor exhibited. The saint had no part whatever in the authority of the government, but they made use of his virtue and credit to oppress him, in the same manner as sinners employ the succours they receive from God in offending Him. He undertook the task of crushing himself, and he succeeded in it. He wrote everywhere, warmly insisting that his persecutors ought to be respected and obeyed. His letters at this period are filled with exhortations and entreaties, that every one should submit to the visitor and to the new vicar, in a true spirit of obedience and subjection; notwithstanding this, if any one offered resistance and objections, the blame was thrown upon the saint, who was immediately accused as the seducer.

It is true, Cherubini did not insult the venerable old man to his face, in the manner Mario had done, but he continually calumniated him in his absence, spoke of him most contemptuously, treated him most vexatiously, by opening and detaining his letters, and also by declaring war against all who loved and esteemed him. He carried his hostility to its utmost limits, when he deprived him of the dearest treasure he had on earth. As we have already stated, the saint had ever most tenderly loved the venerable Glicerio Landriani, had the highest opinion of his virtues, and had given juridical information thereon in the process for his beatification. That he might never be without some memorial of this his cherished son, he caused the heart of the holy young man to be carefully deposited in an urn, which he always kept in his own cell. He often carried this heart with him when he went to visit the sick, and covered his own miracles and instantaneous cures, under the merits and intercession of Glicerio. The inhuman Cherubini robbed him of this precious treasure, and this blow was perhaps the one he felt most keenly in his old age: such was the return made by Stefano to his father and benefactor. The saint frequently received forty, sixty, and seventy scudi at a time, sent to him by generous friends, who intended him to employ the money in furthering his cause, or in the relief of his indigence; but he did no such thing, he always carried the whole sum to Cherubini, who accepted it, and then ridiculed him behind his



back, for paying such good wages to one who trampled on him, and whom he thus enabled to bribe and regale his own persecutors. But the riches of Calasanctius were lodged in heaven, and Cherubini augmented them by his derision and contumelies on earth.

Pope Urban VIII. died on the 29th of July, 1644. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Panfilì, was elected his successor on the 15th of September, and assumed the name of Innocent X. To the congregation already deputed to examine the question of the Pious Schools, the new Pontiff added a fifth cardinal, Alfonso della Queva; however, they soon lost one, Falconieri being appointed to the legation of Bologna; he had been in favour of the saint, consequently was opposed to the visitor and Cherubini. At the beginning of this same year, Cardinal Cesarini, the affectionate protector of the Pious Schools, passed to a better life, and his loss was a serious affliction to Joseph.

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE SAINT CAUSES HIS DEFENCE TO BE WRITTEN.  
HIS MIRACLES. HE IS REINSTATED IN THE GENERALSHIP. OPPOSITION TO THE APPOINTMENT. APOSTOLIC BRIEF FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ORDER.

At the beginning of the year 1645, the Saint fell dangerously ill, and his death was apprehended, the more so, as at the age of eighty-nine

it could scarcely be expected that he could have constitutional vigour enough to resist the violence of the complaint. But our Lord visited him only to exercise his patience, not with an intention of giving him as yet the crown of justice, to which he had still to add the brilliant gems of heavier trials. It was a deep affliction to the holy man to see his order grow weaker day by day : the religious were dying off, and yet the visitor was resolute in forbidding the admission of novices who might be formed into future workmen. The consolation of hearing of the conversions effected by his sons amongst the heretics of Poland, Bohemia, and Moravia, degenerated into bitterness at the reflection, that those who had the power had not the will to fill up the vacancies caused by death and absence. In the meantime, his adversaries did not slacken in their machinations ; on the contrary, they gained ground by securing the favour of one of the ministers of the new Pontiff. The Saint multiplied his prayers, and trusted with unshaken confidence in God and in the patronage of our Blessed Lady. Neither did he neglect to employ such human means as prudence dictated. He commissioned two excellent advocates, Francesco Firmiano and Theodoro Amideno, to write in defence of his cause, which he called the cause of God. To these two, Monsignor Bernardino Panicola voluntarily joined himself. This bishop (formerly one of the children of Calasanctius) had several serious conferences with Cherubini, whom he gave to understand that all the measures of the visitor

tended to the destruction of the order, and were consequently directed against Cherubini himself, who was partially gained over by these warnings ; but when the assessor and the visitor became aware of this, they found means to win him back again. They promised him, that as soon as the order was destroyed, he should be created perpetual rector of the Nazarene College, where he might live in every sort of comfort and credit. A hungry man opens his mouth to swallow everything, without examining whether poison may not be concealed in the food. Cherubini, therefore, soon returned to his former sentiments, and with the visitor eagerly endeavoured to represent Calas Sanctius as a good man, it is true, but both silly and obstinate.

This silly man, whom the perverse were contemning, was most benignly hearkened to by God. Father Ignazio Guarnotti fell accidentally from the top to the bottom of a steep stair-case ; his skull was so fearfully fractured, that the surgeons pronounced him beyond the reach of cure. Nothing more of life seemed to remain in him than strength of lungs to scream in so terrible a manner as to frighten the whole house. Joseph happened to be at the altar, and hearing the cries of the unfortunate man, he inquired as to the cause. He was told, was moved to compassion, and groaned in spirit ; then he raised his eyes to heaven and conversed with God ; at that very moment the wounded man was perfectly cured. Not long before this, Donna Victoria Plantanidi brought her little daughter, who had been blind

for two years, beseeching him with great confidence to relieve her from so sad a calamity : he simply placed his blessed hand upon her eyes, when she was immediately able to look both at her benefactor, and her dear mother. To him likewise was Diana Litrici indebted for the free use of her left arm, which had long been motionless through excessive suffering. These testimonies of Heaven in favour of Calas Sanctius, seem not to have been understood by his enemies.

As the deputed Congregation was soon to hold another session, the visitor and Cherubini strained every nerve to dispose the meeting to consent to the destruction of the order, and to keep Joseph at a distance from all share in the government. The session was held on the 18th of July, when, contrary to all expectation, it was decided that the founder should be restored to his government, and that the Pious Schools should still rank as a religious order. Cardinals della Queva and Ginnetti, as well as Monsignor Paulucci, so powerfully advocated the cause of justice, that the assessor was at last obliged to yield to their opinion. The joy of the religious at this intelligence was indescribable ; and it was welcomed in the provinces with public demonstrations ; these, however, were painful to the holy father, who warmly recommended to his children an ever equable conformity to the divine will, both in prosperity and adversity. Though the decision of the Congregation took the visitor and Cherubini by surprise, they did not lose courage, and though they had been unable to

prevent the formation of the decree, they resolved to do their utmost to suspend its execution. The powerful visitor excited in the mind of the Pontiff some strong opinions highly disadvantageous to the Pious Schools. Then to induce the Congregation to change its former decree, a calumnious document was presented to it, wherein, under pretext of zeal for the conservation of the institute, it was proposed "to reduce the Pious Schools to the rank of a Congregation, similar to that of the Fathers of the Oratory, instituted by S. Philip Neri;" by which means, it is pretended, the order might be saved. This document contained ten most furious paragraphs, and was printed in the summary of the processes, though without the author's name. Amongst other things we read in it, "This is an order which has increased and extended itself by disobeying the holy Apostolic See, which had forbidden its extension beyond the circumference of twenty miles of Rome. Neither can it show by what authority it has spread itself in several provinces, and even so far as Germany and Poland. It is said that the general, during the present suspension from his charge, has not refrained from exercising it, and this, even in things prohibited by the Congregation of the Holy Office." It is moreover said, that in chastisement of his disobedience, he deserves to be looked upon as unfit to govern; and then it proceeds as follows: "The new assistants, as well as the old ones, nay, the very partizans of the general, assert that the order cannot stand, un-

der the line of government which he pursues," &c. This is but a small sample of the copious calumnies, so boldly dispersed throughout this document, and which well unveil the character of the visitor. In the Processes, it is true, he figures as he deserves, but in his own day, he gained his point, and brought dire tribulations on the saint, as we shall show; much, however, of his aggravating treatment must be omitted on the score of brevity; the reader who may wish for more ample details, may consult a longer Life of the saint, written by Father Vincenzo Talenti, published in 1653. Though I must necessarily be brief, I cannot omit on the present opportunity, offering an observation made by the Saint's advocate in the Processes, in opposition to the calumny of his inaptitude to govern. He drew up a list of forty-five of the religious disciples of Calasanz, who lived and died in reputed sanctity, and whose causes either already are, or deserve to be, introduced in the Congregation for beatification; and from the sanctity of the sons, he inferred what must have been the sanctity of the father.

On the 8th of September, the congregation again assembled, when Cardinal Roma announced that his Holiness had determined to reduce the order of Pious Schools to a simple congregation; that he desired nothing further should be deliberated on by the congregation than the form of this reduction, and that the Pontiff's intention was to be kept secret: the meeting then adjourned to a future day.

The congregation met again on the 3rd of February, 1646, when the form of reduction was discussed. By order of his Holiness, the assessor drew up the minutes of the brief, which after various alterations, was signed on the 16th of March. The most important points of the brief are these: 1st, The order of Pious Schools shall be reduced to the rank of a congregation without vows. 2nd, Those who are already professed, may pass to any other regular order. 3rd, That no others be allowed to make their profession. 4th, That in future the priests of the Pious Schools shall be entirely subject to the ordinaries. 5th, That neither Calas Sanctus nor any one else shall have the rank or authority of general; neither shall one house depend on another. 6th, That suitable constitutions should be made by apostolic commission; in the meantime the congregation shall be ruled by the older members. Various reports of the impending brief were already in circulation, and the saint was expecting the fatal blow; before it had even been signed by the Pope, two persons at Naples, asserted that several in Rome had with their own eyes read a copy of the brief. The visitor had possibly imparted the secret to some of his friends, that he might enjoy the anticipated pleasure of their congratulations on his rectitude and zeal. On the evening of the 17th of March, the secretary of the Cardinal-vicar Ginnetti, made his appearance at S. Pantaleo, when assembling the religious family, he published the said brief. Thus did the storm, long foreseen, but never deserved, fall on the head of the saintly old man.

## CHAPTER VII.

FORTITUDE OF THE SAINT. HIS UNION WITH GOD.  
FRESH TRIALS. DEATH OF THE VISITOR AND OF  
CHERUBINI.

THROUGHOUT the course of his life, Joseph had never experienced so terrible, so overwhelming a blow as this. In the ignominy of his public incarceration, the affront was personal to himself; it was in his own person that he was ill-treated and despised; but when the destruction of the order was decreed, it was wounding the very apple of his eye. He had instituted it with no other aim than the glory of God, and because he deemed it expedient that poor children should, from an early age, be brought into the path of eternal salvation. He had been led to the undertaking by no caprice of his own, but was called to it by the voice of God, and he usually styled it the work of God. For the sake of establishing and maintaining it, he had renounced all worldly honour and expectaney, and had undergone great toil and trouble for the space of forty-nine years. From the mere impulse of pure zeal, he had (noble as he was) reduced himself so as to become vile and contemptible; from being rich, he made himself poor; from being learned, he made himself, as it were, ignorant, lowering himself to the capacity of the poorest and roughest of the children, for it was such as these that he always took charge of, that he might instil pio-



ty together with education. When, behold, all at once, by the permission of God and the malice of men, the edifice erected with so much care, is upset from the very foundations! St. Ignatius Loyola affirmed, that if he had to witness the destruction of the order he had founded, a quarter of an hour's prayer would have been requisite for him to regain his usual serenity of soul; and St. Teresa acknowledges, that the fear of seeing the reform introduced in the first convent abolished, filled her with grief. A murmur of zeal, a burst of holy grief, would, under the circumstances, have been not only blameless in Calasanctius, but would even have been commendable, for charity would have justified it; but charity itself had made a league with fortitude and resignation to the Divine Will in the heart of the saintly old man; and though he was humble in spirit, he was neither perplexed or disturbed. When the reading of the brief of his condemnation ended, he calmly uttered the words of holy Job, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." With good reason, then, did Cardinal Lambertini, afterwards Benedict XIV., in his address to the congregation in 1728, compare him to the patient Job. On the same evening he wrote as many letters as he could to the superiors of the different houses, to inform them of the fatal decree; these letters were penned with as much composure and indifference, as if the affair had no connexion with himself. Witnesses declared on oath that they were utterly astonished at his heroic, immi-

table fortitude. He survived the blow two years, during which he uniformly exhibited the same exalted virtue, in his letters as well as when speaking. Transpierced to the very soul, as his religious children were, he consoled them, and exhorted them to bless the Lord, frequently saying to them, "Children! we resemble the apostles in one point, that we suffer reproach for the name of Jesus; let us also endeavour to imitate them in the point immediately preceding this; the apostles went about rejoicing." When it was publicly reported that the destruction of the Pious Schools was the work of such and such persons, he wrote to the superior of the house at Messina on the subject, in terms which give a beautiful idea of the sentiments of his noble heart.

This admirable fortitude, heroic endurance, and generous disengagement from earthly things, were the necessary consequences of his charity and intimate union with God. Witnesses, both secular and religious, who were familiar with him, deposed on oath in the processes, as to wonders they had observed in him. It was known, that even in external occupations the thoughts of Joseph never wandered from God: amidst his occupations he frequently burst forth in fervent ejaculations. He seemed unable to talk of anything but God and heavenly subjects; nor could he endure to hear his religious engage in any useless, facetious, or frivolous conversation. One person deposed as follows: "Before the Blessed Sacrament, he appeared like a seraph to those

who beheld him; and when celebrating holy mass he seemed to sparkle with the love of God. In spiritual discourse he became so inflamed with the love of God, that the splendour of his countenance could not escape the notice of those who conversed with him; for it was even reflected upon their faces: such was his fervour when speaking of the things of God. It was observed by many, that when he was in prayer, his face was resplendent like the sun." We will say but little of his frequent ecstasies, and profound raptures, by means of which God raised him from himself, and from the world. In the latter years of his life, he celebrated mass in the private oratory. Under pretext of not scandalizing people by the length of his mass, he used to desire the lay-brother who served it, to go out after the Sanctus, and attend to his own affairs for half an hour or three quarters of an hour, and then return to the oratory. He was often found absorbed in God, with his arms extended in form of a cross, and frequently raised from the ground: indeed he was often found in this posture both in his cell and in the oratory, more especially when he was immersed in contemplation. Very little sufficed to alienate him from sensible things. In such a state, Joseph could not be otherwise than strongly attached to God, and unmindful of himself. He could not do otherwise than willingly submit to insults, viewing them as he did, as coming from the hand of God. Further motives of affliction were not wanting to Calasanctius. When the order

was reduced to a simple congregation, he had to witness its decline from day to day. Some of the professed, because they were not sufficiently strong in virtue and the religious spirit, others, because they could not bear their utter desolation, and to be pointed at as the miserable remnants of an abolished order, some, instigated by the adversaries of the Pious Schools and of the saint, either joined other religious orders, or enrolled themselves among the secular clergy, as they were empowered to do by the brief, provided they had the subsidy either of a benefice or patrimony.

There were persons, who for the sake of aggravating the afflictions of Calas Sanctius, not only tempted the weak, but even furnished them with money, to enable them to take advantage of the brief. In this manner did two hundred quit the congregation, and a still larger number passed into other orders. The Pious Schools and their houses soon became desolate, whilst every one called upon Joseph for help; yet, what succour could he afford, beyond that of his unwavering confidence and efficacious prayers? The saint's heart was still further lacerated by the letters he received from Germany, which stated, that unless he could send an additional supply of workmen, the fathers there would soon be obliged to close and quit their colleges; and thus the children would be deprived of education, and the heretics of instruction.

To complete his anguish the visitor and Cherubini circulated the report, both by word of mouth

and writing, that Calasactius by his mismanagement and obstinacy had wrought the destruction of the order. By his mismanagement, "because when unfit to govern himself, he would not yield his authority to one who possessed the ability requisite for governing with advantage and success;" which was to say, that the pastor would not abandon his flock to the mercy of the wolf. By his obstinacy, because he would not consent to limit the teaching in the Pious Schools to reading, writing, and arithmetic, as the visitor projected and proposed to the congregation, destined as it was to destroy the institute indirectly, if unable to destroy it by more direct means. It is true Joseph had steadily opposed this change as disadvantageous to the public: he presented his remonstrances on this point to the before-named congregation, and he made his advocates insist upon it in their legal documents. The visitor's object was to restrain Joseph's charity, and limit the benefits of the institute to the youngest and poorest children only, to the prejudice of the Christian republic, and in opposition to the maxims of the Gospel, which recommend a great supply of labourers when the harvest is abundant. We may here observe, that if Joseph had condescended to this project, tending to the indirect ruin of the order, he would have been a wise superior in the opinion of the visitor, instead of the inapt being he was represented. But the most absurd contradictions are inevitable when our words are dictated by malice and passion. When the Saint heard himself reproached and accused by

the visitor and Cherubini as the destroyer of the order, he offered no apology, but answered with a prophetic spirit, "Before the expiration of two years, I and the authors of our calamity shall stand in judgment at the tribunal of Almighty God, and then the truth will appear and be made evident." This prediction was literally verified: his persecutors preceded the Saint, who died at the end of the second year, and thus all three passed to the other world where falsehood instead of triumph, meets with punishment.

To the two foregoing causes of affliction was added a third, perhaps even still more painful than the other two. After promulgating the brief for the suppression of the order, Pope Innocent X. commissioned the assessor to draw up rules and constitutions for the Pious Schools, now reduced to the rank of a congregation. The assessor entrusted the charge to Father Stefano Cherubini under the direction of the visitor. From this Calas Sanctius inferred the utter devastation of his beloved vineyard, conjecturing, from the well-known character of the law-givers, what the laws would be: they were soon reduced to system, but to such a system as would soon lead to the utter extermination of the Pious Schools. They were submitted by the Pope to certain prelates for revision, who did not approve of them, because many of the articles were directly opposed to the good of the institute. As soon as Calas Sanctius heard the dull murmurs of this second tempest, he applied himself to prayer with full confidence, and besought our Lord to dissi-

pate the storm. "I am in hopes," he wrote to Father Longa in Palermo, "that before the new constitutions can make their appearance, God will have found some opportune remedy." This opportune remedy was found by God, who withdrew the visitor out of this life before he could have the satisfaction of procuring the papal approbation for his new, exterminating, rules. He was subject to a very painful complaint, which compelled him to have recourse to a surgical operation; the operation succeeded admirably, but as the pain continued unabated, he took some opium in hopes of obtaining a little sleep; this was on the 5th of May, 1646: the sleep proved a perpetual one, for on the morning of the 6th he was found dead in his bed: he had just completed the third year from his nomination as visitor, during which time he had been the unwearied persecutor of the Saint. Calas Sanctius was deeply afflicted when he heard of his death: he assembled all his religious in the domestic oratory, spoke in praise of the deceased; spoke of the respectful gratitude due to the executors of the Divine Will; appointed suffrages for the soul of the visitor, just as if he had been the signal benefactor of the order; and declared that he himself had always prayed for him with great affection of heart.

This charity towards one's enemy is the height of Christian perfection, as the angelical Doctor Saint Thomas teaches; of this sort of charity there are many brilliant instances recorded in the processes for the Saint's canonization. After the

death of the visitor, nothing further was said about the new constitutions, and the Pious Schools continued to follow those drawn up by their saintly founder. We must not separate Father Stefano Cherubini from his friend and colleague, through whose endeavours, joined to the influence of the misguided assessor, he had been appointed rector of the Nazarene College. The Auditors of the Rota, who were at that time the protectors of the college, on examining the accounts at the end of July, 1646, discovered that Cherubini had been unfaithful in the administration, in consequence of which they deposed him from the office of superior. In the following October he fell into a grievous fault, and was banished from Rome to Frascati: after about a year he was able to return to Rome and to the same college, then transferred to a house nearer the Vatican: his return, however, tended to his confusion; people pointed at him in the streets, saying, "There goes the destroyer of the Pious Schools; he has survived the others, who are already punished by God." He suffered from a heart-grief so profound and dark, that his blood became corrupted, and his body was soon covered with a hideous leprosy, similar to that which had devoured Mario, his former friend and companion. But he was wise; and opened his eyes in time to acknowledge the hidden hand of God that struck him.

Feeling convinced that he had irritated Divine Justice, by conspiring with the visitor and Mario against the innocent and holy man, he religiously



and prudently believed that he could not do better than interpose the mediation of Joseph between God and himself, for the expiation of his misdeeds. He sent for the rector of the college, and earnestly entreated him to go to S. Pantaleo, and in presence of the whole community, ask pardon of Father-general, in his name, for all the injuries and vexations he had inflicted upon him: we will give the scene in the rector's own words: "When I had performed this act, the Father-general's countenance became inflamed, and he stretched forth his arms in the form of a cross, and uttered these words with true nobleness of soul: 'With all my heart I forgive him; I forgive him with all my heart. May God thus forgive me my sins! I never have desired anything but the salvation of his soul.' These words were said with so much feeling, that whenever I seriously think of them, I cannot restrain my tears." Joseph, infirm as he was, and bending beneath the weight of ninety-two years, barefooted, in the month of December, and though at a considerable distance from the Vatican, prepared with all haste to go and visit him. As soon as the sick man beheld him, he exclaimed, "Father-general! pardon me in charity! pardon all my injuries!" The saint rushed towards him, interrupted him, embraced him tenderly, consoled him, and assured him that he had always prayed for him, as he still did, that our Lord would be pleased to preserve His Holy Spirit in him, even until death. He visited him again on the 5th of January, and found him in a

lethargic sleep; he blessed him, and then called out in a loud tone, "Father Stefano, how do you do?" Awaking with a start, he opened his eyes, and answered, "Father-general—Father-general, help me; I am very ill," with other expressions of veneration, affection, and satisfaction, at having his most worthy father beside him, and at being again able to ask his pardon. The saint exhorted him to confidence in the Divine Mercy, to make acts of the principal virtues, and then inquired whether he had made his confession. Being answered in the negative, because he flattered himself he should soon recover, the saint advised him to confess, and to receive the other sacraments by way of preparation for death. "Yes, father, yes! I will confess to you." "No, not to me," replied Joseph; "prepare yourself, I will send Father Garzia to you this evening; you shall make your confession to him: and then at nine o'clock, in whatever state you may be, receive holy communion." The hour of nine in the evening seemed rather inconvenient to the religious, who proposed to give him the Viaticum the following morning instead. "No," rejoined Joseph, "let him communicate at nine." The invalid said, "I will do just as Father-general desires." In the course of the evening Cherubini felt himself so much stronger, that he said he would make an attempt the next morning to go down to S. Pantaleo, and pay his respects to Father-general there. When the saint was informed of this, he said, "No, that will not be; though he will, it

is true, be brought here." About half an hour after he had received the Viaticum, he was seized with delirium, and never recovered his senses till within a few minutes of his death; and of these few minutes he availed himself to receive Extreme Unction: in the course of that night he expired, at the still promising age of forty-eight. His body was immediately conveyed to S. Pantaleo, where Joseph was waiting to receive it: for he wished to assist personally at the obsequies, and give him the benefit of his suffrages.

I have dwelt somewhat minutely on the death of this man, on account of the many edifying circumstances which accompany it—a wicked man repentant—an offender humbling himself—the offended unmindful of his injuries—the oppressed interceding for the oppressor—a dying man flattering himself with the hope of recovery—a saint prophesying—a merciful God granting the death of the just to a sinner—all these circumstances form a scene well calculated to console, to move the heart, to instruct, to encourage, and to alarm. The Cardinal-vicar Ginnetti, who well knew the sanctity of Joseph, as well as the unjust oppressions he had undergone, on referring to the death of his three persecutors, said with much earnestness and feeling, "We ought to be very careful how we afflict and persecute the servants of God." In truth, there is less danger in persecuting the weak, than in persecuting the just: the weak resent and make

known their sufferings ; but God perchance keeps silence. The just suffer and bless God for it, and God avenges them.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST ATTEMPTS FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE ORDER.  
THE SAINT'S CONFIDENCE IN GOD. HIS PROPHECIES  
AND MIRACLES.

THE pontifical brief for the extinction of the order, grieved those princes and magistrates in whose territories it was established, and where it flourished so successfully. The king of Poland, the diet of the kingdom, the ecclesiastics, the senators, all wrote to the Pope, to his ministers, and to the Cardinals, strongly urging them to procure a revocation of the brief against the Pious Schools. Father Valeriano de' Magni, a celebrated Capuchin, and brother to Count Francesco, Lord of Strasnitz, drew up a very learned document, showing that the brief was surreptitious, due only to the false representations made by the visitor to the Pope. This writing was circulated through Poland, Germany, Italy, and even Rome itself; the cardinals and prelates looked upon it as demonstrative.

The Poles resisted the execution of the surreptitious brief, but the religious believed it to be their duty to imitate their holy founder, and therefore went to take leave of the king and the ministers, preparatory to their return into

Italy. The king, the court, and the high officers of state were dismayed at this unfavourable intention; they insisted on detaining the religious until they should have written to his Holiness. We will give an extract from one of these letters, written by the Grand-chancellor himself to the secretary of state at Rome; in this letter were inclosed those of his Majesty, of the two orders of the state, and a copy of Father Valeriano's document; the extract is as follows: "Continuing their farewell visits, to the regret of his Majesty and many others, they came on the 10th of this month (April, 1647,) to my house, to take leave of me likewise: I confess, I felt very much shocked, and detained them, until I could again discuss the matter with his Majesty and some of the senators, who happened to be then at court; the case was judged to be of sufficient importance, to deserve the public attention of the diet, the result of which you will learn from the letters addressed to his Holiness. The annexed document has been generally circulated through this kingdom by orders of his Majesty, together with the proofs of the surreptitious intervention to obtain the extinction of this admirable order: the document is conclusive; the arguments are well calculated to convince; hence, there is no person who is not able to understand the real facts," &c. He next adduced his reasons why it was neither expedient, just, or useful, to abolish the order. The Papal nuncio at Warsaw had also written very urgent letters to the same secretary of state,

representing not only the high reputation and utility of the Pious Schools, but likewise the sentiments of the king and of the whole republic, together with the danger and scandal which would be occasioned in those parts by the extinction of a religious order, venerated even by the heretics themselves. The same endeavours were made by the senators of Naples, by many princes of the empire, by the Grand-duke Ferdinand II., by the Cardinal de Medici, and by Prince Leopold de' Medici.

Although the patronage of so many illustrious personages proved unavailing, Joseph still retained the fullest confidence that his order would be restored to its former state; hence, he exhorted his religious to persevere in the institute, and both by word and writing, gave them positively to understand, that Almighty God permitted him to see this restoration inscribed amongst the decrees of His Providence. We will state his own words, and the occasion in which they were given. After the publication of the papal brief, Father Giuseppe Pennazzi was urged by his family to return to the paternal roof; being persuaded that God had bestowed the spirit of prophecy on Joseph, he wrote thus to him on the 29th of March, 1646: "I will adhere to whatever your paternity shall certify with regard to the revival of the order; but since you tell me it will not be destroyed, I will not change my resolution." The Saint replied, "Be of good heart, and rest assured the institute will stand;" and elsewhere he says, "Do not be-

lieve that our order, though it seems to be so, is destroyed, (through whose means God knows,) as if it should never rise again; nevertheless, by the assistance of our Lord, it will become more ample than ever, and I think before very long too." To the religious of Genoa, who were wavering, he thus writes, "Do not be uneasy, let us hope through the mercy of our Lord that the institute will stand." To those at Naples he says, "Be constant, and you shall see the help of God over you: and now we are praying for you, that you yield not to sorrow, but that your virtue may appear more bright in tribulation." He wrote in equally positive and precise terms to Fano, Pisa, and other places, as occasion required. Many who were in his confidence, both secular and religious, attested in the processes, that these words were familiar to him: "As long as I live I will hope against hope; because the work which I did, was done merely for the love of God."

The sons of Calas Sanctius relied upon his words, knowing by experience that our Lord favoured His servant with the light of prophecy. His predictions were very frequent about this time. To the lay-brother, Antonio Cannelli, he foretold an early death: before the expiration of a month he was no longer of this world. He told Father Sylvestro Bellei (who after the brief quitted the congregation) that having done so, would turn out to be to his own shame. To Father Giovanni Battista Carletti, who, after quitting the congregation, wished to rejoin it, he

announced approaching death. He assured another who was leaving him, that he would return before his profession in another order which he was about to join. Every one of these predictions were literally fulfilled.

He restored the Duke of Turin to health when he was at the point of death, by one of his letters ; and revealed to him the reasons (known only to the sick man) why our Lord had smitten him. On Sunday, 26th of July, 1648, the saint as usual gave a moral sermon to his religious assembled in the oratory : he suddenly stopped in the middle of the discourse, sighed, and with great feeling, and inflamed countenance, uttered these words: "Children! let us pray for the Holy Church, which has great need of it ; and in particular that the Catholics may not be overcome by the heretics : just at present there is great need of prayer." They all knelt down and prayed with him : soon afterwards the sad intelligence arrived of the taking of the castle of Prague by the heretics, who, precisely at the hour so remarkably noticed by Joseph, had been introduced into the citadel by a traitor.

On the 7th of October, 1647, died Father Pietro Casani, who has frequently been named in this history ; he was one of the first companions of the holy father, was a man of eminent virtue, and was esteemed by every one in Rome as a great servant of God. The testimony of Calas Sanctius alone is a sufficient eulogium of his sanctity. To satisfy the people it was found necessary to leave his body exposed for three days,



during which time our Lord was pleased to grant many miraculous favours around his bier in behalf of his devout clients : the fame of these was soon spread abroad, and reached even to the pontifical throne. The fathers of the Pious Schools flattered themselves, that when his Holiness became aware of these facts, he might perchance be inclined to revoke his brief ; and the same hope also crept into the minds of several distinguished persons. Cardinal Colonna openly expressed as much to the Cardinal-prince of Nicholsburg. But this was by no means a necessary consequence ; besides, Joseph was to die upon his cross. The just and prudent Pontiff was persuaded that he had been promoting the welfare of the Pious Schools, when he reduced it to a simple congregation, for so had things been represented to him. If he had believed himself called upon to reverse his decision, in consequence of the gifts which Almighty God might confer upon His servants, he need only have cast his eyes on Calasanctius, in whose favour the wonders of our Lord were no hidden matter. Every corner of Rome re-echoed them, and so did the whole of Italy, Spain, and other kingdoms and provinces. Cardinal Crescenti, the Duke of Poland, the Duke of Acquasparta, Father Biscia the Theatine, Canon Ximenes, and very many more, praised and blessed God in the processes, for having glorified His servant so openly before all the people. In the latter years of the Saint's life, the liberality of our Lord became still greater : his tongue was rendered more fluent in prophetic

warnings, and his intercession more powerful in benefiting the distressed. He twice instantaneously cured the Countess Ortensia Biscia when she was dangerously ill, and he restored Giovanni Benedetti to health when every sigh was expected to be his last. At the inundation of the Tiber on the 5th of December, 1647, which he foretold, he surrendered to the poor sufferers the whole store of community provisions, for which Providence afterwards repaid him with interest. His religious in Messina were once actually destitute of food, and he, though absent, visibly appeared and gave them some pecuniary assistance, encouraging them to place their whole confidence in God, and to remain true to their institute. On the evening previous to the dreadful explosion of the powder-magazine at Savona, Joseph, though in Rome, was visibly present at Savona, and called Father Agostino Vagnari, three different times, desiring him to take a companion and go to the belfry to ring the alarm bell: this timely warning saved them from imminent danger, and probably from death. To one of the lay-brothers, whom infirmity had made unfit to travel, he sent a letter, desiring him to proceed from Genoa to Savona: his blessing gave him strength to obey, and then he cured him.

## CHAPTER IX.

## LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH OF JOSEPH.

WHEN his spiritual children were condoling with him on the trials to which he was still subjected, Calas Sanctius often used to say to them, "Wait till August, and we shall then see what God will permit." As he always said this with a cheerful face and voice, they fully expected that something very advantageous to the institute would then occur, perhaps even its revival: but they deceived themselves; he was merely prophesying his own death. On the 21st of July, he wished to walk as far as the church of S. Salvatore in the piazza Madonna, to gain the benefit of several indulgences granted by different Pontiffs. On his way home he struck his right foot violently against a stone, so far wounding the great-toe as almost to tear away the nail; the pavement was stained with blood, and he was unable to walk any further. In an old worn-out frame, even the more essential parts suffer from the effects of an injury inflicted on the extremities, and the derangement quickly extends through the whole system. At the beginning of August his old complaint of heat, fever, and burning thirst returned upon him; at first the doctors made but slight account of this, and promised an early cure: the Saint smiled at these prognostications, and said, "The malady is within: the doctors do not understand this, because God so wills it, and I must conform myself to His

divine will." The malady was not judged to be mortal until the pain amounted to spasm, and the inward flame betrayed itself outwardly. Calas Sanctius, however, was convinced of his approaching end, and from the first began to dispose himself for the grand change; though in effect, the saintly tenor of his life had been but one long continual act of preparation. His final preparation, however, was a brilliant epilogue of all his virtues. Eye-witnesses made an exact diary of what they saw, from which we now select the chief flowers interspersed through their narrative, arranging them according to the virtues to which they belong, and which being extinguished together with the life of Calas Sanctius, were crowned together with him. For the sake of brevity I shall couple those theological and moral virtues, which seem to have more immediate connexion one with another.

#### HIS FAITH AND PIETY.

Through the whole course of his life Calas Sanctius demonstrated the strength and constancy of his faith; but during his last illness, he gave full proof of being that just man, who, as the apostle says, lives by faith. He spoke with as lively transports of the Divine grandeur, and of the other mysteries of revelation, as if he had already thrown aside the veil which covers the poor pilgrim's eyes on earth. His eloquence on these subjects never flagged, never was at a loss for material. Knowing the day on

which he was to pass out of this life, he sent two of his sons to the Vatican Basilica, saying to them, "Go in my name and kiss the foot of the statue of Saint Peter; place your head beneath it also in my name; and before the confessional of the holy Apostles, recite the profession of faith for me, and protest that I desire to live and die in the faith which they taught." He sent others to his friend Cardinal Checchini, to ask him to obtain the benediction of his Holiness "in articulo mortis." He despatched others in his name to venerate the Madonna de' Monti, to which he had been in the habit of paying a daily visit. He anxiously asked to have the sacrament of Extrême Unction administered, that the full possession of his senses might contribute to the exercise of his faith. A somewhat striking fact will show how strongly he was attached to the Church, the mistress of truth, and the depository of divine mysteries: aridity of tongue and an extraordinary rigidity in the jaws was one of his chief sufferings, occasioned by his burning fever, and the over-heated state of his liver. The remedy then in vogue, in such a case as this, was the prohibition of any refreshing beverage, which was to be avoided as poison, especially if the symptoms were dangerous; but to mitigate the rigidity of the jaws and tongue, a suitable lenitive was prescribed, which afforded Joseph much relief. By way of recommending the composition, some one told him it was invented and used by Henry VIII. king of England: this information seemed to change the

soothing substance into a fire : the saint instantly discharged it from his mouth, saying reproachfully, "Do you give me a remedy invented and used by one who was a rebel to the Church? throw it away! throw it away!" nor could he be pacified till the remaining portion of the paste was thrown out of the window. He would spare himself no sacrifice, however difficult, that could show honour to the name of holy Church. One of the principal articles inculcated in his last pious testament, given by word of mouth to his sons, (a testament which they have ever faithfully and jealously observed,) was, to pay respect, submission, and filial obedience to the Church and to the Apostolic See. He had reverently kissed, and exactly submitted to the brief, though surreptitious, which had destroyed his order; leaving the fraud and calumnies of the envious to the judgment of God; whilst he was content to venerate the mark of that hand which binds and loosens.

Acts of piety are the strongest proof of faith, and these formed the principal occupation of our saint during his last illness. From the 21st of July until the second of August, though so severely wounded in the foot, he never omitted the celebration of his daily mass. When the increasing malady became stronger even than his courage, he could do no more than drag himself along to the adjoining oratory, to assist at the holy sacrifice, and receive holy communion. Those who saw him in this act, thought they beheld an angel prostrate before the throne of God. Then

retiring to the silent solitude of his cell, where none saw him, he gave full vent to the affections of his heart. On the 22nd of August he took to his bed, and this was, as it were, the altar and temple of his piety. Every day he purified his soul by the sacrament of penance, precisely as he had done when in health, and then received holy communion, subjecting himself to the inconvenience of fasting, rather than be deprived of this heavenly bread. It had always been his practice to read over in the evening the mass for the following morning, that he might meditate upon it in the night; on rising in the morning he read it again, and a third time, just before he vested himself for mass. Up to the last day of his life, he regularly desired to have the mass of the current day read over to him; and with the assistance of other priests, he daily recited the divine office; and as he died on the night preceding the feast of S. Bartholomew, he went to share the glory of that apostle, after having, by anticipation, as usual, recited the matins and lauds of his office. What physicians would have deemed inconvenient to other sick people, was a solace to Joseph. Having been recommended to moisten his mouth from time to time with water, he desired that the water should be put in a little earthenware cup, that had a cross and other implements of the Passion sketched on the bottom of it; but on Friday, the 21st of August, he would not touch a drop of the refreshing water, that he might experience something of the thirst of his dying Redeemer. The day preceding his

happy death, he requested that the priests would come one after another, and sit beside him, slowly reading the Passion of Christ, as related by the four Evangelists; and that they would recite the recommendation of a departing soul. What a beautiful example is this to the dying, especially those who obtain the favour from God, of not losing their senses before they lose their life!

#### HIS HOPE AND HUMILITY.

The true Christian, by means of the virtue of hope, which has for its principal object eternal happiness, ought to abandon himself to the omnipotence, the goodness, the mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and ought entirely to distrust himself. At the approach of death, Calasanctius showed how strong and generous this virtue was in him. He often raised his eyes to heaven, and the cheerfulness of his countenance, words, and gestures, plainly gave the assistants to understand the certainty which his soul felt of soon reaching heaven. "I am most joyful!" said he to Father Vincenzo Berro on the 13th of August, "confiding in the goodness of our Lord God. Our Blessed Lady has bid me not to doubt, but that she will always assist me, particularly at the hour of my death." On the 21st, Father Caputi, who was in waiting to assist him if necessary, but who stood outside the room that he might not disturb him, heard him conversing for a long time, as if in a dia-



logue, though he could not distinguish with whom he was conversing. Amongst other things he heard him reproaching himself with having been a useless servant, and an ungrateful creature, saying that he deserved nothing but hell for his sins, but protesting that he looked for pardon and Divine mercy, through the intercession of the person with whom he was conversing. These sentiments of firm confidence and humility were frequently repeated by him, and were new neither to his tongue or heart. Under the most bitter trials his most familiar expression was, "Let us hope in God; let us leave God to act." He looked upon himself as a man devoid of all merit, and as one of the greatest sinners on earth; hence arose his sentiment of profound self-contempt and disesteem, sentiments which accompanied him through life. We need not repeat here, what has been already related of his self-abasement and immense toils for the sake of his poor children, and which he continued to the last; we may, however, add, that washing dishes in the kitchen, carrying wood, serving at table, kissing the feet of the religious, cleaning the ass, sweeping the house, accompanying the children home from school, begging through the streets with a wallet on his shoulders, were his frequent occupations. He could not bear the slightest allusion to the nobility of his birth, or the splendour of the Calas Sanctius family; his confessor usually cautioned others never to utter a word in his commendation, because of the sensible pain it occasioned

him. In a word, Divine light had given Joseph a knowledge of himself; a knowledge even of that mysterious point, his own nothingness; he saw nothing in himself but the misery of the creature; that is to say, necessity and sin; and this it was which occasioned the implacable war he perpetually maintained against his own body. To his religious, it seemed miraculous how he could exist, considering the scanty share of food which he allowed himself, and which he always took without relish or enjoyment. Weakness, infirmity, and old age seemed not to affect his arms when self-flagellation was in question; neither did they excite compassion enough to induce him to lay aside his hair-cloths; in his own eyes, he was but a miserable sinner. When he had received the Viaticum, his weeping religious prostrated before him, and besought him to bless them; but he excused himself, declaring that he was not worthy to do so. On their remarking, that even S. Francis blessed his religious before he died, Joseph answered, "Give me the spirit of S. Francis, and I too will do it." His humble resistance was at length overcome by their repeated entreaties and sighs. A deluge of tears flowed from the eyes of his religious, when he, with expressions of deep humility and shame, begged pardon of them for all the injuries and offences committed against them. But, what were these injuries and offences? they could discover but one, and that one was his now leaving them in bitterness and sorrow.

## HIS CHARITY AND POVERTY.

Much has been already said of the love which Joseph bore to Almighty God ; but it never appeared so brilliant and ardent as when he became conscious that this love was about to acquire its full measure of perfection in the bosom of the Eternal Good. Never had Joseph been seen so cheerful and happy, as during this his last illness, which was to snap asunder the bands that fettered him. When the doctors recommended him to be quiet, under the flattering idea of recovery, he sweetly answered them, "I am happier now than I ever was ; I am preparing to go." He was never weary of speaking of God and of the joys of heaven. His long colloquies after communion, which, as we have said, was frequently administered during his last illness, were composed of such words and affections, as well betrayed the ardours of his heart. On the morning of the 24th of August, after receiving the holy Viaticum at his own anxious entreaty, his charity appeared more brilliant than ever. The feeling contrition with which he recited the Confiteor ; the spirit of humility with which he thrice repeated the "Domine, non sum dignus ;" the long and powerful exhortation by which he exhorted his beloved sons to the practice of virtue, and to zeal for the institute, served as fresh fuel to the flames of those most lively affections to which he abandoned himself, when conferring with Jesus in His Sacra-

ment, who was thus regaling him for the last time. The annalists of the order have preserved the very expressions wherewith Joseph poured forth his heart before Jesus ; but I will not quote them, tender and touching as they are, because the pen of the writer reduces them to little less than a cold corpse, deprived as they are of the spirit imparted to them by his tongue. Three days before his soul quitted its frail tenement, he desired to be placed on his back, that his face might be turned towards heaven ; nor did he after this change his posture. His countenance, and the sighs which from time to time escaped him, manifested the vehemence of his desires. In poverty he had centred his riches and his delight ; a sufficient proof of his disengagement from earthly things ; he had nothing in his cell but a little miserable furniture, and such clothes as were positively necessary, and these were always patched and worn out ; moreover, he resigned even these into the hands of Father Garzia, then superior, that he might die despoiled of everything, in imitation of his crucified Lord. All worldly goods, nay, even the almost necessities of life, were distasteful to him, as deserving nothing but contempt.

#### HIS FORTITUDE AND PATIENCE.

The mortal illness which, by little and little, was consuming the saint, did not relieve him of those trials which weighed most heavily upon his heart. Up to the last day of his life, he would

have every letter read to him that was directed to him. The fathers who were at a distance from Rome, and had not as yet heard of his alarming illness, wrote him full accounts of their deplorable condition, and besought his aid; within the space of a few days, he received many of these distressing letters. From Cesena they sent him word, that the stock of provisions for the students of the Nazarene College could no longer be furnished, because the harvest had failed. He heard from Pisa, that the few masters remaining since the destructive brief had all been ill for some time, and there was no one else to undertake the charge. Another letter stated, that the house and schools there must be abandoned, unless other members were promptly sent. From Florence there came urgent entreaties for provisions and assistance, with news that many were abandoning the expiring institute, because they had not courage to risk their ease and reputation in it. This disastrous intelligence wounded his most tender and delicate feelings, but it did not weaken his confiding fortitude; he raised his eyes to heaven, recollected himself in God, and cast himself into the arms of Providence; it is no wonder, then, that he endured his sufferings with such heroic patience. Under the excruciating pain in his foot, and under the burning pains of fever, he never uttered a word of complaint. By way of mitigating the intense heat, an oval-shaped piece of marble, previously steeped in cold water, was applied to the region of the liver; but one day as the religious who assisted

him was applying it, he accidentally let it slip from his hand, and it broke in three pieces; the saint merely said to him, with great sweetness, "God forgive you! for more than thirty years that stone has served me, and refreshed me when suffering from the most acute pains in my liver; but, patience! God would try me, even in this."

He endured a burning thirst to the very last, but was obedient to the doctor's injunctions of tasting no refreshing beverage; neither did he express the slightest repugnance to most nauseous medicines, even though experience told him they were injurious to him. The servant of God had long ago resigned himself to bear every sort of cross.

#### GIFTS "GRATIS DATA."

Our Lord contributed to render precious the death of Joseph, by the copious concession of those gifts, usually called *gratis data*. From the 3rd of August, up to the day of his death, God would have him enjoy, by anticipation, the delights of Paradise, owing to the sweet presence of our Blessed Lady and his holy patrons. He enjoyed these heavenly favours almost every night when quiet and alone, and after communion, when he always asked to be left alone with God; those who waited outside the door, could hear him converse with the blessed spirits, and also noticed the unusual bright light which filled his cell. The saint himself could not al-

ways conceal these heavenly favours. On the 18th, after being regaled with the flesh of the Immaculate Lamb, he had a vision which greatly consoled him. The Blessed Mother of God appeared to him, accompanied by all the deceased members of his congregation, (with one single exception,) amounting to upwards of two hundred and fifty; some of them were seated with holy Mary, whilst the others were standing up; after a lengthened conversation, they all disappeared, when Joseph exclaimed in a loud voice, "Where are our fathers?" Father Vincenzo Berro, who was waiting at the door of his room, quickly entered, and told him that some of them were in the schools and others in the church. "I am not speaking of them," rejoined the saint, "I mean those who are dead." Father Berro did not at the moment understand him, and was therefore silent, lest he might annoy the invalid. But, a little later, when Father Constantino Palamolla, a celebrated Barnabite, a great servant of God, and the intimate friend of our Saint, called to visit him, he related the vision to him, that he might feel more secure as to the real meaning of the different postures of his religious. Palamolla asked him whether the venerable Landriani was amongst those who were seated, and hearing that he was, Palamolla concluded that those who were favoured with seats, were already in the happy repose of heaven; but that those who were standing, were yet on the road to glory, being detained in purgatory, and this too was Joseph's own opinion.

It was no small comfort to him to know that one only was missing out of so numerous a company.

Our Lord, moreover, deigned to distinguish him by the revelations of hidden secrets known only to Himself. During the last few days of his life, he assured his desolate children of the future restoration of the order, with greater confidence and precision than ever. One day as a professed cleric of Palermo was assisting him, he foretold him all the future events of his life by way of admonition, and to provide for the safety of his soul: the prediction was afterwards verified in every respect, and the previous knowledge of it was a great advantage to the young religious. On the 20th, after Father Berro had read over the mass of the day, Joseph said, "Twenty and five, twenty-five." Father Berro had often before heard him make this sort of computation, and therefore entreated him to explain the meaning of it: as he continued importunate, Joseph at last said, "I shall then be no longer of this world." On the evening of the 24th, Doctor Pergnani said to him, "Night is coming on, father-general, give me your blessing, and farewell till to-morrow." The Saint answered, "May God bless you, Don Pietro! to-morrow you will assist at my dissection." He sent word to Giulia Merenda, a distressed lady, whom he had long assisted with abundant alms, that she was not to distress herself on his account, because before his death took place Almighty God would already have provided for her: on the 24th, the Auditors of the



Rota, by a regular deed, assigned her a daily supply of bread and wine, besides a scudo per month. Cosmo Vanucci, the Pope's secret almoner, visited the dying Saint, and entreated him to pray God soon to call him out of this world; Joseph gave the promise, and a fortnight after his own death Vanucci died as he had lived, namely, as a saintly Christian. As soon as the dangerous nature of the Saint's illness became generally known, there was a commotion amongst all his acquaintance of every rank. Every one would go to visit him, to ask his blessing, and recommend themselves to his prayers: nor were these mere visits of compliment, but of commendable religious interest. Many persons of high rank took their children, relatives, and friends, to receive his blessing, some of whom obtained other favours besides his blessing. A certain nobleman requested to be admitted, but was refused: he was more surprised than offended, as he saw others beneath himself in rank freely enter, so he began to consider that the refusal was owing to his own fault, attributing it to mortal sin, which he knew unhappily disfigured his soul: he immediately proceeded to the church, humbled himself before God, cleansed himself in the sacrament of penance, and then returned and asked to see the dying Saint, who at once consented, and received him with great cheerfulness and friendship. A painter in the service of the Duke of Savoy, boldly entered the room amongst a crowd of other people, and threw himself on his knees at the bed-side. The Saint turned his

face from him with an air of disgust, and did not so much as favour him with a look. The artist, in confusion, listened to the inward voice of remorse, groaned in his heart, and bending down his head, wept with contrition, resolved to repair without delay to the feet of a priest, and reform his life; whereupon the Saint looked at him quite joyfully, gave him his blessing, and whispering in his ear, admonished him to keep the promise he had made to God. Four prelates, who had formerly been the scholars of Calasancius, in addition to his blessing, received secret warning from him of certain hidden defects, which were leading them from the paths of rectitude. Being thus admonished they repented, and published what had happened, not sparing their own confusion, in order to glorify the Lord in His prophet.

The concourse of pious visitors was really surprising, nothing less than the charity of Joseph could have submitted to such an annoyance: indeed, it was impossible to check the veneration of so many people. Many of those who entered his room, did so with the intention of committing those little pious robberies which are done without shame or remorse, nay, with exultation and satisfaction: nothing was safe in the cell of the dying man: his old shoes, patched slippers, crockery, zuchetti, every remnant of his poor garments were pillaged, and became treasures to the pious avidity of the devout. During the last two days of his life, the lay-brother, Giuseppe Toni, who was tailor to the community, was kept fully employed

in making zuchetti for the Saint, for no sooner was one put on his head than some body or other ran away with it. Many brought the cloth to make zuchetti for him, whilst others brought them ready made, requesting to have them put on his head and then restored to them, in hopes that a little of his perspiration might have been absorbed by the cloth. In one day his cups and platters were changed fifty times at least; nor would the heavier furniture, such as the chair, table, or stool, have been saved if the religious had not providently locked them up. Even the sick endeavoured to visit the servant of God, in hopes of deriving some benefit from the visit. Sebastiano Previsani, who had long been unable to stir, in consequence of an injury inflicted on the right knee, was dragged by two robust persons to the bed of Calas Sanctius, who was entreated to bless the knee: his own faith and the blessing of the Saint cured him on the spot. Transported with joy he jumped up, seized the cup of his deliverer, and ran out of the house, proclaiming as he went along through the streets both the mercy of God and the sanctity of Joseph. Victoria Gracchi took her little son, a cripple from his birth and unable to put his feet to the ground, begging one of the religious to present the child to Joseph, and ask him to touch it with his wondrous hand: the woman, so full of faith, was gratified, and her son was returned to her perfectly cured.

It was with splendid testimonials such as these, that God prepared the passage of Calas Sanctius

from time to eternity. He died in ignorance of his own worth, though it was well known both in heaven and on earth. On the evening of the 24th, when the religious had dismissed all the pious visitors, Joseph as usual recited the matins and lauds of the following day with Father Berro: he then inquired what o'clock it was; and was answered "Two." He began to count upon his fingers, two, three, four, five, and there he stopped: nobody understood his meaning until afterwards, when it was observed that he died shortly after five o'clock. At half-past four he swallowed five mouthfuls of a medicine ordered by the doctors; and he did so, because the person who assisted him begged that he would, as an offering to the five wounds of the Redeemer: having counted the draughts, he said, "That is enough—no more—I have taken five—besides it is all useless." After this, he took one end of the sheet in his left hand, which he fastened to his shirt, and made a sort of double covering, as a defence to his modesty, even when he should be dead; and this was a preparation to the prodigy to be related a little later. Being sensible that his last moment was at hand, all the religious assembled to recite the last prayers, in which he joined his feeble voice: at about half past five on Wednesday, the 25th of August, 1648, the Saint being nearly ninety-two years old, with clear intellect, his eyes fixed on heaven, his right hand raised in the act of blessing his spiritual children, and uttering thrice

"Jesus, Jesus, Jesus," sweetly expired. Happy they, who were present, who saw, who wept, and who were instructed thereby!

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## CHAPTER X.

### OBSEQUIES AND BURIAL OF JOSEPH.

THE sons of Calas Sanctius up to this moment had been overwhelmed with grief; but no sooner was he dead than they experienced within themselves an unexpected, an incomprehensible change: they were filled with indescribable joy and composure: in their depositions they declared they knew not how to account for this. The face of the saintly old man retained the same soft expression, and the same colour, as when he was alive and well. In him, death seemed to be that sleep which our Lord gives to His beloved ones when He calls them to the possession of His unfailing inheritance. On raising the coverlid to remove the holy body, a sweet fragrance pervaded the place, giving, as it were, a heavenly testimony, that that body had been the temple, the dwelling-place of sanctity. The religious next made preparations as usual for washing the sacred body: on attempting to loosen the knot which the dying man had tied, as above stated, every one was petrified with astonishment—the cold limbs of the deceased resumed vigour and motion; his right-hand hastily replaced the covering; and when the assistants

again attempted to remove it, in order to continue their pious task, he with his left-hand made a sign as if to show that even in death he would jealously preserve the strictest modesty ;—a clear proof of the watchful vigilance with which through life he had preserved an unsullied innocence. On the morning of the 25th of August, his body was privately exposed in the domestic oratory, and after dinner it was examined anatomically, when the root of the complaint was discovered in the liver. The celebrated Castellani began the operation on his knees, out of reverence to the Saint : when the heart was pricked with the dissecting knife, a stream of fresh blood issued forth, which was collected on pieces of cloth, and the fathers were thus enabled to gratify the wishes of the pious, by distributing this cloth as relics.

Early on the morning of the 26th, the corpse was conveyed into the church, and entrusted by the superior to the custody of Fathers Berro and Caputi, who minutely registered every circumstance connected with the proceedings. When the body was carried into the church, the only persons present were Don Marco Antonio Magalotti, and a little boy about four or five years old, named Tomaso Nunziati : the tongue of the latter was made eloquent with an eloquence not his own, for as soon as he caught sight of the bier, he cried aloud, "Behold the Saint! behold the Saint! behold the Saint!" The voice of innocence was re-echoed by the whole of Rome, in less than an hour five or six thousand persons had crowded into the church, and this

was but the beginning of other more numerous assemblages. "Let us go to S. Pantaleo, to see the saintly father who is dead," was the general cry throughout the city: it was necessary to place eight religious around the corpse to guard it; nor was that enough. In the course of the morning the city of Rome appeared depopulated; all the inhabitants being collected in one close corner of it: the crowd could not have been greater around the granary of some beneficent prince during the misery of absolute famine. As the sanctity of Joseph had been long known to people of every rank, so did persons of every rank hasten to visit his sacred corpse, plebeians, merchants, courtiers, prelates, princes, ladies, cavaliers, and ambassadors. The highest in rank thought it no degradation to leave their equipages and mingle with the poor, especially when moved to it both by piety and necessity. The crowds if possible increased at the clamorous joy of the women, who went shouting through the streets, when they witnessed the cure of Catarina d'Alessandro. She had for a long time lost the use of her right-arm, and suffered such intense pain in it as to be occasionally deprived of reason: pain and misery quickened her faith; she repaired to the church, where, after much prayer and many tears, she placed her arm upon the venerated corpse; the contact produced an immediate cure: in a transport of joy she exclaimed, "A miracle! a miracle!" On her way home she incessantly repeated, "The holy father-general, exposed at S. Pantaleo, has miraculously cured me." This

news increased the crowd, so that fifteen religious were obliged to surround the catafalque, and raise barriers by way of defence, but the barriers were destroyed and the guardians overpowered: every one pushed and was pushed; every one was determined to get at the bier. Popular devotion, which believes itself authorized to sanctify irreverence, filled the church with confusion and noise; for no one would be satisfied who did not see and touch. The veneration of the Romans was not even satisfied with this; fervour was converted into boldness, and boldness led to thefts upon the holy body: some cut off pieces of his vestments, his alb, maniple, stole, slippers, rosary, cap, his nails, hair, beard, and even his eye-lashes could not be saved: one man, less cautious than the rest, in cutting the nail off one of the toes, drove his scissors into the flesh, and fresh blood instantly issued from the wound: at this sight the people were in a transport, and eagerly pressed forward to secure some of the precious liquid: the scene reminded one of the miraculous water issuing from the rock when struck by Moses. Handkerchiefs and aprons were the cups in which the venerated liquid was collected. Two ladies, Maria Spinola Raggi, and Violante Raimondi Riari, who happened to be at the foot of the bier, could scarcely provide and apply sufficient linen. It became necessary at last to procure a guard of soldiers, to restrain the pressure of the crowd; and even this resource seemed insufficient. Groups of people pushed their way into the church by main



force, bearing the sick and infirm on their shoulders, or in their arms, in hopes of obtaining a cure. Surely, this was a beauteous spectacle of charity, compassion, faith, and piety! The beautiful triumph of divine beneficence, all the more glorious to the defunct Calasanctius, as he had been the more oppressed in life. Antonia Valangi, who had been confined to her bed for six months, was borne in on the arms of several pious women; Giacomo Ercolani, crippled both in arm and leg, besides suffering from continual fever, was carried on the shoulders of some powerful men; Maria Gerometti, a child ten years of age, deformed from her birth, was brought by her own mother; Leonora Paolinin, despaired of by the doctors, was carried half dead as she was, by a robust man; Francesco Taricco, unable to move, in consequence of acute pains in his loins, legs, and hands; Felice Plantanidi, a martyr to the gout; Catarina Sittini, three years consumptive; Bernardino Angelini, worn down by a tertian fever of ten months' standing; Domenico Amati, suffering from a severe wound and swelling in the right thigh and leg; Lorenzo Astolfi, unable to move his right arm for three years; Anastasia Catili, apoplectic from the age of five; Alessandro Carissimi, tormented by scrofula; Domenica Porzio, lame of one hand; Girolama Beltradi, stupified and afflicted with continual giddiness; Angela Schiavi, almost blind and liable to most violent head-aches; Giacinto Tinazzi, a priest, whose tongue and speech had been materially affected for seven years; all these, and many

others omitted for the sake of brevity, were instantaneously cured, as soon as they came in contact with the holy body ; and they all returned home joyfully blessing God, and exalting the merits of His deceased servant. From time to time might be heard the exclamation, "A miracle ! a miracle !" Some cried out, "I am cured !" others wept for joy. The very devils contributed to increase the tumult, being compelled to abandon the possessed, when brought near the holy body. I must not silently pass over the case of a pious lady who was cured of very severe sufferings, to which she had long been subject ; and immediately ran and purchased a quantity of flowers, with which she returned to the church, and almost covered the catafalque with them, intending thus to honour the Saint. The flowers, however, did not long adorn the bier ; those who were unable to procure any of the hair, nails, clothing, or other things belonging to the Saint, seized upon the flowers, which, afterwards, when applied to the sick, wrought many cures. By the application of these flowers, or some remnant of his garments, the following persons were suddenly cured of various diseases : Donna Octavia Orsini, Lavinia Cagnoni, Lucretia Deodati, Agatha Gior-dani, Lavinia Castellani, and Antonio, the servant of Don Gherardelli, who was actually at the point of death. This was indeed a time of propitiation, when, to obtain, it was only necessary to ask. The Cardinal-vicar, Ginnetti, gave orders that particular notice should be taken of all the miracles Almighty God might deign to work, for

the glorifying of the noble soul of Calasanctius, in order that these notes might be made available in the processes. D. Giovanni Nati was appointed to register them, according to the spontaneous depositions of the benefited parties.

Owing to all these prodigies, the crowds increased to excess. The barriers being again destroyed, the religious feared that the spoliation of the corpse might amount to indiscretion; to prevent this, they desired the soldiers to remove it, and place it on the steps of the high altar, in order that the balustrades might serve as a check to popular impetuosity, but they were soon broken and thrown down. Monsignor Camillo de' Massimi, who had been for some time watching these proceedings from the choir, went off to the palace to give a minute account of it all to the Pope; the holy Father raised his eyes to heaven, blessing God, and then despatched a body of Swiss guards to protect the bier; the Swiss just arrived when the religious and soldiers had succeeded in withdrawing the saintly remains from the eagerness of the people, and had placed them in a room adjoining the sacristy. The soldiers were then placed at the doors of the church, to keep the people in due order, as they went in and out; whilst the Swiss guards undertook to guard the corpse. Another barricade was erected in the middle of the church, and then the Swiss found means to convey the catafalque thither. Then again began the hurry, the noise, and the pious thefts, though with less confusion than before. During

the mid-day heat, when the crowd had somewhat dispersed, it was resolved to admit no more; so the doors were locked and the religious obtained a little rest, of which they availed themselves to dress the saint anew, for all his garments, religious and sacerdotal, were so completely lacerated and torn up, as scarcely to suffice for decency; but these garments, damaged as they were, became precious and venerable in memory of him who had been clothed in them. The interval of rest, however, was but short, and was anything but peaceful. The people, who again surrounded the house and church of S. Pantaleo, grew impatient at the delay, suspecting there might be some design of burying the body secretly. There were some, who, having access to the adjacent houses, scaled the walls, and boldly entered the house of the religious, who were mightily surprised at this unexpected appearance of the externs; at the same time, the pressure of the multitude forced and broke down the doors, and then the victorious torrent instantly filled both church and house. In vain did the religious endeavour to exclude women informing them of the breach of inclosure; the excited piety of a female crowd, deems itself beyond the reach of laws, when these offer any obstacle to the object they have in view. It became absolutely necessary, then, to reconvey the corpse into the church, and no sooner was this done, than the tumult, the pilfering, and the miracles recommenced.

Whilst the above-related incidents were taking

place, a memorial was presented to Monsignor Rivaldi the Vicegerent, in which it was reported, that although the founder of the Pious Schools had been dead two days, the religious of S. Pantaleo still kept him unburied, pretending that he was a saint, and occasioning tumult, &c., and, therefore, his immediate interment ought to be insisted upon. This application, which bore the appearance of prudent zeal and caution, was, in reality, the bitter restlessness of envy. It is true to say, that we seldom maintain cruel feelings towards the dead, especially those whom the Divine mercy is pleased to glorify. The splendid testimonials, both of earth and heaven, to the sanctity of Joseph, were a condemnation and reproach to the injustice of his past persecutions, and this reproof and condemnation could not be pleasing to his unjust persecutors. In astonishment at the request, the prelate saw through the malice of it, and driving away the supplicants with indignation, he exclaimed, "O God! can it be possible! He is dead, and still they persecute him!" The envious maligners were not yet vanquished; they succeeded in deceiving one of the subaltern ministers, and partly gained their purpose. A corporal with eight soldiers and a notary were despatched to S. Pantaleo, with orders, in the name of the tribunal, that the religious should at once consent to bury the deceased. In obedience to the order, the fathers immediately desired the Swiss to guard the doors and restrain the crowd: no sooner were the guards out of sight, than the

audacious notary bade the soldiers seize the body and lock it up in a place contiguous to the sacristy, surrendering it to the custody of this infamous troop, with directions to put it underground as soon as the crowd should be somewhat dispersed. This interval of time proved favourable to the soldiers, who, penetrated with feelings of profound reverence at what they saw and heard, knelt down and prayed as long as they pleased: the corporal cut off half the scarf and kept it, as a pledge of the arrest. Whilst affairs were in this state, the celebrated Father Caravita, S. J., went to S. Pantaleo to venerate the remains of Calas Sanctus, and hearing that they were under arrest and could not be seen, he mounted on a chair, and with that spirit of God, which so entirely animated him, he addressed the people assembled there, eulogizing the virtues of the deceased, and re-kindling the devotion of his hearers. Just at this time the Princess Panfilì de' Justiniani, the Pope's niece, arrived: the soldiers did not dare to refuse her admittance; they opened the door, therefore, and with her entered Cecilia Borghi, who had long suffered from epilepsy, and who at each quarter of the moon was partially deranged; this unfortunate lady placed her head beneath the feet of the Saint, and from that time forth was perfectly cured. When the body was seized in this extraordinary manner, the superior of S. Pantaleo hastened to the Cardinal-vicar to ascertain his will, and the real intentions of the tribunal. He was much astonished at such

indecorous audacity, reproved the notary, and ordered the immediate release of the corpse, which was to be again placed in the middle of the church for the benefit of the afflicted, and the glory of God. This was done, to the infinite delight of the people; and the same insatiable outbursts of devotion were again repeated. The night was more than half over before the crowd could be induced to retire; the religious then closed the doors, and by main force transferred the bier into the domestic oratory, when they dismissed all the externs. Early on the following morning they consulted together, and decided that it would be most expedient to bury the venerated corpse before the church doors were opened. The Saint had now been sufficiently glorified by God, both alive and dead. After dinner of that same day, the recognition of the body took place, with the usual formalities, and in presence of many persons of distinction, who requested to be admitted. In the coffin near to the Saint's head, was deposited a leaden slab, bearing this inscription: "*Illic requiescit corpus Ven. Servi Dei P. Josephi a Matre Dei, Religionis Pauperum Matris Dei, Scholarum Piarum Fundatoris et Propagatoris, qui obiit anno ætatis suæ 92 die Augusti 25, Anno Domini, 1648.*"

## CHAPTER XI.

OCCURRENCES AFTER THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE SAINT. HIS BEATIFICATION AND CANONIZATION.

THE opinion of his extraordinary sanctity, and the fervour of popular devotion, did not become extinct upon the death and burial of the saint. God, who intended to raise him to the highest honours of the Church militant, (through the oracle of the Apostolic See,) has continually granted miraculous favours to the faithful, through the intercession of Calas Sanctus. An account of all those which have been duly authenticated, would suffice to fill a large volume. Father Vincenzo Talenti, selected one hundred of the most striking, and inserted them in his *Life of the Saint*. I avoid the recital of them, deeming it sufficient to have hinted at them, and shall content myself with inserting those which were submitted to the rigid examination of the Congregation of Rites, as well in the cause of the beatification as in that of the canonization. About a year after the saint's death, the Cardinal-vicar Ginnetti, with the approbation of Pope Innocent X., undertook the processes on the virtues of Calas Sanctus, and closed them at the end of two years. Innocent X. was succeeded in the pontifical chair by Cardinal Fabio Chigi, who assumed the name of Alexander VII., and then the religious of the Pious Schools conceived better hopes for the cause of



their founder, and the relief of the poor congregation. They knew that the new Pontiff, like his predecessor, was animated by a spirit of justice, and that he, moreover, nourished a tender benevolence towards the institute. Justice can easily find motives for affording succour, whilst benevolence knows how to carry them out. The holy Father was by no means annoyed at, or indifferent to the many letters he received from kings, sovereign princes, bishops, and communities, soliciting the beatification of Joseph; on the contrary, he one day said joyously to Cardinal Rospigliosi, his secretary of state, "It seems as if the whole world was in motion to obtain the beatification of this Father Joseph." He commissioned Cardinal d' Elci to introduce the cause on the 8th of April, 1665, and on the 5th of March, 1667, he was pleased to approve the commission. Cardinal Nini assured Father Caputi, the postulator, that his Holiness ardently desired to place Calas Sanctius on the altar, in quality of blessed, out of personal esteem for the saint, and sincere affection for the order he had founded. But the fulness of time was not yet come, wherein our Divine Lord would have him exalted thus on earth. At the death of Alexander VII., the cause slackened, the processes and the defence required much time; much has to be objected, where much has been done, and much has been suffered. The decree, "*Constare de virtutibus, &c., in gradu heroico,*" was published on the 8th of September, 1728, by Pope Benedict XIII.

After some years, they passed to the processes on the miracles, of which three, chosen from a great number, were selected and proposed to the Congregation of Rites: they are as follow: First, Salvatore Morelli, of Anagni, aged thirty-five, had been for four years unable to move himself in consequence of violent paralysis, otherwise than by resting his elbows on the ground, and so dragging his legs along behind him. Whilst the body of the saint was exposed at S. Pantaleo, he was raised by two men sufficiently to be enabled to kiss the holy feet and hands of Joseph; upon this, he felt a vivifying sensation through his paralysed limbs, had no further need of support or assistance, and immediately began to walk about freely, returning grateful thanks to God for his recovery; he lived to the age of eighty-two in the enjoyment of robust health, and was able to walk from Anagni to Rome, as he did in the year 1696, to give an authentic relation of his cure in the processes. The second and third were more recent, and were both wrought at Florence, where it was necessary to compile the processes. Christina Ceccherini, a Capuchiness nun, had for seven years suffered excessive pain, owing to an injury of the spine and the vertebræ of the loins, together with loss of blood, convulsions, fainting-fits, difficulty of breathing, repugnance to food, &c. After being confined to her bed for three years, she could no longer endure that posture, and was, therefore, seated in a chair, the most easy and convenient that could be procured; here she remained

motionless for seventeen months, suffering with incredible patience; being given over by the doctors, she looked for nothing but death. At last, she had recourse to our saint with faith and fervent prayer; his intercession was so prompt and efficacious, that no sooner had she finished her invocation, than she rose from her seat, ran to the choir, and there returned thanks to Almighty God and to her venerable benefactor for a cure so little looked for. Third, owing to an incurable aneurism of long standing, Margaret Tanti had been confined to her bed for five years, she suffered acute pain from general inflammation; when death was at hand, she asked to be blessed with a relic of Calas Sanctius; no sooner was this done, than she rose from her bed perfectly cured. Benedict XIV., of glorious memory, expedited the brief of his beatification on the 7th of August, 1748, and it was celebrated on the 18th of the same month, in the church of the Vatican.

Being raised to the honour of our altars, the Saint continued to benefit his clients, by interceding for them with the Arbitrator of life and death. Three miracles wrought by him, were selected to serve the cause of his canonization, already eagerly solicited. 1st, Maria Constantia Cominati, a nun in the monastery of S. Clare, near Todi, was in 1741 declared to be consumptive by the doctors; from that time till 1752, she suffered from constant fever, head-ache, nausea, burning in the stomach, inflammation of the limbs, a dry cough, spitting of blood, and

difficulty of breathing. Moreover, in 1744 a disease appeared in her liver, manifesting itself externally by a hard tumour. The faculty pronounced her incurable, the maladies were so complicated, and were attended with so many dangerous symptoms. She was so emaciated as to resemble a skeleton covered with shrivelled skin: she had several times received the last sacraments, and even the doctors had ceased visiting her. On the 7th of July, 1752, she turned her heart and prayer to Joseph, whose picture she had, and began a novena of very short prayers in his honour; the novena proceeded to the 15th, on which day, after finishing the prayers, she fell asleep; she composed herself to sleep with full confidence in her great advocate. The person who assisted her withdrew, that she might not disturb her rest, for it was many years since the poor sufferer had enjoyed a peaceful slumber. At break of day the nun awoke, and found herself not only perfectly cured, but even robust, her flesh was restored and her complexion blooming. 2nd, Vincentia Buda of Valentia, when a mere child, fell to the ground in her sleep, injuring and dislocating the spine, a part that is never damaged without serious consequences. Her father, a surgeon by profession, applied all the resources of his art, but in vain, for the cure of his daughter; he was unable to save her from paralysis in the legs; to this was joined the malady called atrophy. Her legs were become so stiff, lean, and black, as to look like two sticks fastened to her knees; they were pricked, cut,

and put into boiling water, without producing any sensation of pain. The poor young lady had been in this state for some years, when in November, 1643, the religious of the Pious Schools at Valentia celebrated a solemn triduo for the beatification of Calas Sanctus. On this occasion she conceived a hope that God would cure her through his intercession. She undertook a novena, and at its conclusion she besought her afflicted father to teach her how she ought, for the last time, to address herself to the servant of God, in order to obtain the desired favour; animated by a lively faith, he encouraged his unfortunate child, and suggested a very tender confiding invocation to Joseph; they recited it together three times, when, behold, in a moment, both paralysis and atrophy had disappeared; her legs recovered motion, feeling, warmth, and flexibility; whilst her flesh and health were perfect.

3rd, Anna Maria Eleutheria Pela, a gentlewoman of Citta della Pieve, suffered exceedingly from some complaint in her right ear, which proved to be a polypus of considerable size; this was either to be cut out, or be burnt with caustic; the lady dreaded both these remedies, and, in hopes of avoiding them, recommended herself with great confidence to Blessed Joseph, applied his relic to her ear, and was immediately cured. The second and third of the first set of these miracles, and the first and second of the last set, were approved for the beatification and canonization. Gratitude demands a special mention of Monsignor Assemani, Bishop of Apamea; of

the many bishops who had a hand in the processes, he was the only one who took part in, and was the director of four of them. His kind regard made him travel from Rome to Florence, then to Todi, then to Citta della Pieve: his learning and ability put the processes on a right footing, and his indefatigable zeal and earnestness of purpose brought them to a favourable issue. Pope Clement XIII. himself attested the indubitable proofs of the two first miracles; he had ever shown great zeal in the cause, and on the 12th of October, 1766, promulgated a decree to the effect that they might with safety proceed to the solemn canonization of the servant of God, Blessed Joseph Calasanctius. At the same time the same Pontiff inscribed in the catalogue of the saints the names of BB. John Cantius, a secular priest; Joseph Cupertino, a Minor Conventual; Jerome Emilian, Founder of the Regular Clerics, called of Somasca; Serafino of Ascoli, a Capuchin; and Jane Frances Chantal, Foundress of the Order of the Visitation.

It remains for us now to show how the positive predictions of the Saint, with regard to the restoration of his order, were fully accomplished. When Alexander VII. ascended the throne of the Vatican, he felt deeply for the sons of Calasanctius, and filled them with consoling hopes. He loved the order, because he judged it to be most useful to the public. Whilst he was only a prelate and at a distance from Rome, he kept up a constant correspondence with the religious of the Pious Schools, whose endeavours

he encouraged and supported. When called to Rome to be appointed secretary of state, he himself examined the letters addressed to the Pope and the congregation of Propaganda by the King of Poland, by many princes of Germany, and by the senate of many towns, soliciting the re-establishment of the Pious Schools; attesting that the few religious remaining in those parts, through the Divine mercy, effected numerous conversions amongst the heretics, of whom, in the brief space of two years, 2672 had been won over to the true faith. The religious of the Pious Schools in Rome anxiously cast themselves at the feet of the new Pontiff, to express their joy at his election, their entreaties, and their hopes; exposing to him, at the same time, the wounds of the desolate congregation. Nine years had elapsed since the fatal decree and condemnation to death; owing to it, the government had been destroyed, and every link and dependance between college and college was completely severed, whilst the door had been opened to those who were unwilling to remain and weep over the corpse of their mother. The decree of destruction had been for four years preceded by a prohibition to admit any more novices, therefore vacancies could not be filled up. Their houses were reduced to a small number, which from time to time were closed for want of members. At these representations the beneficent Pontiff said, "We are gratified by your congratulations; pray to God for us, that He may assist us and enable us to govern prosperously. As to your order we will remember it in due

time." In spite of all the opposition raised by some adversaries, ten months had not elapsed before Alexander, by his brief of the 24th of January, 1656, restored the Pious Schools to the rank of a formal congregation, with simple vows and an oath of perseverance ; the noviciates were re-opened, a general and assistants were nominated, and another brief re-established the ancient government and constitutions. Excessive was the delight, and profound the gratitude of the good sons of Calasanctius, who acknowledged themselves totally indebted to the beneficence of Alexander VII. for the restoration of their oppressed order. In the brief for the restitution the Pontiff thus expresses himself: " We, considering that experience (that great mistress) openly shows the institute of the Pious Schools to be useful to the Christian republic, since, through their labours and diligence, children, otherwise inclined to evil through the malice of corrupt nature, are not only instructed in learning, but, what is much better, are imbued with the dogmas of the Catholic faith, of good morals, and of every Christian virtue ; we judge it, therefore, to be of the greatest interest to the public, that they should persevere in so laudable and fruitful an institute," &c.

The superiors of the order, wishing to give some attestation of their poor gratitude to the Pontiff their benefactor, commissioned Father Pietro Mussesti, the disciple of the Saint, and an elegant writer, to compile a Life of their founder : when it was completed, the general and Mus-



sesti repaired to Castel-Gandolfo, and presented it to Alexander, who accepted it with great pleasure, and read it with still greater, I may even say with reverence; after which he consigned it to Cardinal Flavio Chigi, with orders to place it amongst the manuscripts belonging to his valuable family library. Clement IX. the successor of Alexander VII., in 1669 gave a last hand to the re-establishment of the order, again raising it to the rank of a religious order, with solemn vows; and he restored all the privileges formerly granted by Gregory XV.

Towards the year 1730 remonstrances were presented from various places against the Pious Schools, asserting, that according to their constitutions they were only entitled to teach the Christian doctrine, reading, writing, arithmetic, and grammar; that they might only teach the children of the poor; and, finally, that it was not lawful for them to have colleges or seminaries for noble youths. Clement XII. of glorious memory, insisted on having the cause juridically discussed and put an end to. He deputed a special congregation of three cardinals, namely, Marescoschi, Porzia, and Caraffa, and his auditor, Monsignor Passari, to examine the apostolic constitutions, and those of the Pious Schools, as well as every other document bearing upon the subject, and then, after mature deliberation, to pronounce their decision. The examen being concluded, the congregation decided that it had ever been lawful for the regular clerics of the Pious Schools to teach the higher sciences; to admit

to their schools youths of every rank ; and to have colleges or seminaries of education for any class of people. In consequence of this, the Sovereign Pontiff confirmed all these articles by his perpetual constitutions, dated the 1st of May, 1731. “*Quis tribuat, ut omnis populis prophetet, et det eis Dominus spiritum suum?*” replied Moses, to those who would have him prevent two of the people from prophesying.

To the immortal and invisible King of all ages, to God alone be honour and glory for ever.

THE LIFE  
OF  
BLESSED  
IPPOLITO GALANTINI,

FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.



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BOOK I.

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CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, BOYHOOD, AND SIGNS OF VIRTUE IN THE  
BLESSED IPPOLITO.

THE opinion, injudiciously expressed by some persons, that sanctity is not compatible with every state of life, and that every one is not called to a holy life, is as prejudicial to religion, as it is to the goodness of Almighty God. We cannot suppose that the Supreme Being, who has created us to His own likeness, and who requires that we should conform our lives to the life of His divine Son, would exact the observance of precepts which are beyond our strength, or that He would not supply what is wanting to our weakness by the efficacy of His grace. "God is faithful," says the Apostle,

“and will not permit, that, in the state where He has placed us, our power of resistance should be otherwise than fully sufficient to triumph in the battles we may be exposed to: on the contrary, He Himself declares, that He has a special care of us, and by seasonable help enables each one to walk on securely in the paths of salvation.” A slight reflection on the offices of holy Church will suffice to convince us, that when sustained by the power of grace, which the great Saint Augustin calls a fertilizing shower, there is no character, no temperament of man, no condition in which we may not raise ourselves to heaven, if we will but lead a holy life. We shall find amongst the Saints, many who have turned into means of sanctification those very obstacles which, generally speaking, are looked upon as insurmountable, and which are most likely to destroy in us, all resemblance with our divine original: they, however, copied these sacred features so accurately in themselves, and imprinted them so vividly on their souls, that they manifested themselves externally in that truly Christian conduct, which is the unequivocal, distinctive characteristic of piety, efficacious in its acts, acceptable in its merits, and sanctifying in its precious effects. Amongst the number of these happy souls, surely the hero whose life we are about to retrace, does not deserve the last place.

We have here a man ignorant of letters, wholly unprovided with worldly substance, in a word, a poor silk-weaver, who founded a distinguished congregation of seculars, ruled and propagated

by himself, destined to the exercise of the most sublime and beautiful of the Christian virtues; a man, who, to the toils of a workshop, added a thousand others, that he might both by word and example promote the glory of God; a man, who, inflamed with charity, never lost sight of the conversion of sinners, upon whom he threatened vengeance like a true Gospel-labourer, and like a true apostle of Jesus Christ; a man, in fine, who, being placed by the hand of God in circumstances the most trying and afflicting to the human heart, cannot but excite the admiration of the pious reader; all of which ought surely to destroy the mistaken opinion of those who so erroneously assert, that sanctity of life is not compatible with every state, and with every rank of persons.

Blessed Ippolito was born in the city of Florence, on the 14th of October, 1565. His parents were Filippo Galantini and Maria Ginevra Zufoli, of poor but honest families: he was the eldest of four children, and his birth was premature; the sufferings of his mother on the occasion were unusually severe, and life seemed almost extinct in the infant at its very entrance into this world. He was, however, immediately regenerated in the holy waters of baptism, in the church of S. Giovanni, his father giving him the name of Ippolito. The preservation of a life so precious, seems due to the assistance of Heaven, rather than to the care of his parents, or the skill of the doctors.

We know nothing remarkable with regard to his infancy, though from the little which Provi-

dence has caused to be handed down to us, we may safely infer that nature and grace vied with each other in loading him with their favours. Nature bestowed on him a clear intellect, acute wit, a retentive memory, a noble heart, and a magnanimity suited to the enterprizes which he was later to undertake and complete. Grace was even still more prodigal of her gifts. When yet of an age at which nothing is usually understood, reason seemed to be developed in him; he relished nothing but practices of piety, he sighed for nothing but to converse with God, he showed an aversion to nothing but sin, and the enemy of our souls. It was delightful to see him in the churches so attentively and so modestly assisting at the holy functions, that he seemed, as it were, ravished and captivated by them. On returning home, his chief pleasure consisted in turning his poor miserable chamber into an oratory, where he erected little altars, and, like another Abel, offered the first-fruits of his innocence and of his age to the Lord. He imitated the holy rites which he saw practised by the ministers of the sanctuary, and holding the pictures or images of the saints in his tiny hands, he either gazed on them in transports, or endeavoured to adorn them.

To this extraordinary inclination for everything connected with piety, was added the greatest abhorrence of whatever had the slightest tendency to sin. Such was his respectful obedience towards his parents, that no sooner did he know their wishes, than he promptly endeavoured to



comply with them. In proof of this, we need only refer to the processes, where his confessor stated what he had heard his good mother say of him, that she knew not how to expatiate sufficiently on the precious spiritual gifts which she observed in her own Ippolito; add to this the many depositions of trustworthy witnesses, who had been familiarly acquainted with him in the earlier years of his life, and who did not hesitate to assert that they had never detected in him so much as one unruly motion or gesture, had never heard him use a single improper word, or had ever observed, even in his slightest actions, anything contrary to the most unsullied innocence and purity. At this period of his life, whenever he had occasion to associate with children of his own age, he always chose those who were the most remarkable for good behaviour, and he was very careful to give them no subject of offence. It happened, however, one day, when he was amusing himself with several others in shooting with bows and arrows, his little arrow, which was nothing but a stiff straw armed with a bit of copper at the point, accidentally flew aside, and slightly grazed the leg of one of his companions; as soon as Ippolito became aware of the fact, he threw himself upon his knees before the other, shedding floods of tears, and humbly begging pardon for the offence, which was readily granted; he ever afterwards remained warmly attached to this companion, in consequence of this unintentional injury. With reason does the wise man say, that "we may conjecture from

the actions of a child, what will be his after conduct in manhood."

But this ardent inclination to piety, and this extraordinary purity of heart, were not the only striking peculiarities of Ippolito in the earlier years of his life. The main tendency of his mind, and the most earnest of his desires, was to sow the seed of the divine word in the hearts of his brethren. No sooner had he completed his fifth year, and just acquired the first rudiments of letters, than he was obliged to renounce his studies, and learn his father's trade. Being illuminated, however, by a superior light, he soon gave indications of the power of that grace which later on was to direct both himself and so many others through the darksome paths of this world to their heavenly country. He treasured up in his memory whatever discourse or catechetical instructions he heard in the churches, and often repeated them to other children of his own age, with such facility and surprising accuracy, as to excite the astonishment and admiration of the older persons who heard him. The Fathers of the Society of Jesus in Florence, having introduced the laudable custom of teaching children the Christian doctrine, Ippolito attended on these occasions, and was so fervent and assiduous, that he was soon distinguished above all the rest, making such rapid progress as to carry off both premiums and applause; but it was after he was placed at the head, and was appointed teacher to a class of these juveniles, that he excited the astonishment of those fathers, by the diligence

and exactitude with which he acquitted himself of this duty. Ippolito did not content himself with merely teaching children the mysteries of faith and the maxims of religion; he was indefatigable in his endeavours to collect them together, and exhorted them to join him on festival days in frequenting the holy tribunal of penance, in visiting different churches, there to hear the word of God. He was ever equable in temper, not only externally, but likewise in his own heart, where that true joy reigned which is derived from grace alone. His sweetest delight was to speak of the saints, to dwell upon their most sublime virtues, and to promote the imitation of them in others. Gained by his winning manners, a troop of youths assembled beneath his banner, who, despising all other things, strove to emulate him, and thus served as a stimulus to others, who seemed somewhat more cowardly in the practice of Christian piety. So universal and so great was the edification springing from this good example, that some of the inhabitants of the city, less remarkable for morality and good conduct, ventured to reproach these youths, sneeringly inquiring, "Art thou not one of the companions of Ippolito?" The prince of darkness too, saw with an evil eye the wonderfully edifying conduct of our innocent youth, and trembling with rage, he strove to defeat all this good by casting abroad the seeds of envy: his object no doubt was to destroy an enemy, from whom he foresaw he should experience such fatal encounters; or at least he hoped to check his progress by awaken-

ing his fears ; placing before his mind the severe trials and the obstinate contradictions which would inevitably assail him, if he persevered in the career so well begun. But what power can the devil have over a heart burning with divine charity? Ippolito clung tenaciously to his good purposes, to the shame and discomfiture of his malicious tempter. He implored the Divine assistance, and so aroused his diligence and fervour, that his courage never flagged in treading the path of perfection, whither he tended with ardent impetuosity.

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## CHAPTER II.

HE MAKES HIS FIRST COMMUNION WHEN NINE YEARS OLD. HIS PROGRESS IN VIRTUE. WHEN ONLY TWELVE YEARS OLD HE IS SET TO TEACH THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE IN THE CHURCH OF S. MARIA DEL PRATO. WONDERFUL FRUIT FROM HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

By the time Ippolito reached his ninth year, he began to devote himself to the practice of austerity and macerations of the body. He worked the appointed number of hours in company with his parents, always, however, keeping his mind recollected in our Lord, so as to leave no room for idle thoughts or frivolous speculations: he employed all the rest of his time in his accustomed exercises of piety: sometimes enkindling the warmth of devotion with sweet colloquies; sometimes purifying his conscience by means of rigo-

rous self-examination ; and desirous of chastising in his flesh those very faults of which he was not guilty, he fasted frequently, allowed himself but little rest, which was usually taken on the bare boards, and familiarized himself with disciplines and hair-shirts. It is but seldom that so many practices of virtue, joined to such severe penances, so completely take possession of the mind of an innocent child. Father Giovanni Battista Cerebelli of the Society of Jesus, whom he had chosen for his spiritual director, seeing Ippolito so far advanced, did not think he could defer his admission to the Holy Table, there to feast on the Bread of Angels, although he was only nine years of age. We can easily imagine the joy which overwhelmed his heart at this announcement, and the care with which he strove to dispose himself for the reception of this divine banquet. He knew that to be in the state of grace, was the only disposition absolutely necessary ; nevertheless he redoubled his faith, as being the chief stimulant of the soul in her course towards God : his faith was firm and sincere as it ought to be, considering the excellence of a sacrament, which may with truth be called the centre and end of all the operations of grace. Being safely guided by this first of the theological virtues, Ippolito, not rashly, but reverently, carried the eye of his intellect beyond the mysterious veil of the sacrament, there to discover that God who is infinite in His greatness, omnipotent in His power, immense in His wisdom, admirable in His counsels, terrible in His judgments, and holy and perfect in every-

thing. Penetrating yet further, he considered that body which was formed in the virginal womb of Mary; he contemplated the sufferings of Jesus; he enumerated His wounds; he recalled to mind His scourging; he beheld the torrents of blood which He shed; the insults, the contumely which He endured; the cross on which He hung agonizing for three hours; and, in fine, that death which was so torturing and so ignominious. Indescribable were the effusions of holy affection and gratitude called forth by these considerations. Fervent and ardent were the sentiments of the pious youth, and immense was his happiness, as he welcomed his adored, his only Good, into his heart; and so great were the spiritual delights, and the treasures of grace imparted to him by his dear Lord Jesus, that he could never lose the remembrance of that first precious moment.

The effect of this great sacrament in him, was to render him more and more disengaged from all earthly things; more and more ardent in the practice of perfect virtue: great as had been his previous abhorrence of everything tending to sin, he now became cautious and vigilant over the slightest failings: innocent amusements were tedious and disgusting to him. Virtue and sanctity of life were the sole objects of his desire, everything else was to him but as a mere phantom. An ardent wish sprung up in his heart to quit the world entirely, and enter some religious order, thus to bind himself more closely to the object of his complacency; but being fully convinced of the difficulty and even the impossibility

of such a thing at his very early age, he endeavoured to conform as well as he could with the more ordinary customs of religious life; he always dressed in black, and drew up a sort of plan of life corresponding in some measure with that usual in monasteries. As he advanced in age, so too did he advance in virtue: his modesty was most edifying and admirable; his obedience most exact; his devotion most fervent. His exemplary conduct became noticed all through the city of Florence, and excited the admiration of every one. About this time the Cardinal-Archbishop of Florence, Alessandro de' Medici, afterwards raised to the Supreme Pontificate and known as Leo XI. conceived the project of having all the children throughout his vast diocese well instructed in the mysteries of faith and in the maxims of religion, in hopes that they would afterwards cultivate true piety. For this purpose he commissioned Doctor Jacopo Ansaldi, a man of great prudence and probity, to look out in the city for some suitable locality, and then make choice of some worthy subjects, to whom the regulation of this important affair might safely be confided. The church of S. Lucia in Prato was chosen by Ansaldi for the purpose; nothing further remained but to seek out the qualified individuals to be established there: the fame of Ippolito was too widely spread not to have reached the ears of Ansaldi, who at once cast his eyes upon him. He summoned the pious youth, explained to him the intentions of his Eminence, and assured him that he was the one, chosen from

amongst all others, to preside over the new institute. Ippolito strongly objected to the proposal, declaring himself to be totally unqualified for the discharge of such an office, which required a person of more mature age, and more extensive information. At length, however, being impelled by his zeal to promote the welfare of souls, and influenced by the merit of obedience, acknowledging Doctor Ansaldi as the interpreter of the Divine Will, he yielded to the request, and at the age of twelve years began to teach the Christian doctrine in the parish church of S. Lucia.

It would be impossible to describe the care and assiduity with which Ippolito devoted himself to this duty; he sedulously repaired to the church on all festivals, inviting the people by the sound of a bell, and lost not a moment in regulating his plans. Raising the standard of the cross, he sallied forth through the streets and squares of the city, singing pious canticles, and inviting every one to join with him in this holy function. On reaching the church, it was admirable to see him in the midst of a numerous troop of children dividing them into different classes, and then with the assistance of a few other zealous persons, instructing them all in the saving mysteries of our faith. Such was his gentle sweetness of manner, that he completely gained the affections of the whole class confided to his care. Sometimes he made them teach one another, by questions, in the way of dialogue; sometimes he awakened their emulation by the distribution of trifling premiums;



sometimes he aroused them by his fervent exhortations; and sometimes encouraged them by praising their diligent attendance at the meetings. The careful zeal of Ippolito was not limited to children only, persons of every age and sex derived benefit and fruit from his instructions. He made it his aim to instil in all hearts a love of virtue, a knowledge of God their Creator and Preserver, together with gratitude to Him, who by His blood has freed them from the yoke of sin, has made them co-heirs with Him in glory, and has strengthened them with the gifts of His grace, to enable them to attain everlasting happiness. It is worthy of notice too, that Ippolito was obliged to instruct a class of young girls who crowded round him for this purpose, yet he constantly maintained a holy modesty and dignified comportment with them, such as is seldom seen except in persons of well-proved virtue; in this respect, he was the admiration of all who saw him; nor could any one reproach him with an idle word, an unruly gesture, or an immodest glance of the eye. In the meantime, good people rejoiced in the success of the holy enterprise, which Almighty God so well seconded by His grace, that the reformation of manners amongst the youth of Florence may almost be said to have been universal. Games were abolished, vain ornaments laid aside, the pious practices of religion were adopted, the sacraments were frequented, and great numbers abandoning the fallacious

attractions of the world, retired to the cloister, there to lead a life of greater perfection and sanctity.

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### CHAPTER III.

HE DESIRES TO ENTER RELIGION. HAVING FAILED SEVERAL TIMES, HE DETERMINES TO REMAIN IN THE WORLD. HIS PROGRESS IN THE PATHS OF PERFECTION. HIS FATHER'S HARSHNESS. HIS ILLNESS AND MIRACULOUS CURE.

NOBLE souls who direct their steps towards the mount of perfection, are not content to walk in the beaten path pursued by the majority, but, being ambitious of reaching the summit of sanctity, they look to the example of those, who, generously despising the inclinations of flesh and blood, bury themselves in the solitude of the cloister, where, closely united to God, they live in the blissful contemplation of heavenly things, in a total abnegation of self, and in the rigours of austere penance. Such was the wish of our Ippolito. His office in S. Lucia, as master of the Christian doctrine, opened to him a wide field wherein to collect a plentiful harvest for the good of souls. The exactitude with which he discharged this duty, was an occasion of great merit to him, and in due time opened for him a rich mine of spiritual treasures. Notwithstanding all this, his soul was not as yet in perfect peace or fully satisfied.

The mendicant order of the Capuchins, living under rules which had been dictated by an angel to the glorious patriarch of Assisi, is one of the most beautiful ornaments in the garden of the Church, and to this did Ippolito hope to bind himself for life. Rough woollen garments, bare feet, frequent fasts, sanguinary disciplines, continual abjection, severe austerities, and, in fine, whatever is opposed to the maxims and customs of worldlings, may be found prescribed by those angelical constitutions. Ippolito piously envied these holy men, many of whom hastened to the remotest corners of the globe, fighting the enemy of mankind under their humble banner; and he heard with joy that here and there, some of them shone forth in brilliant sanctity, inso-much, that the shores of many distant infidel nations, were watered with the blood of these glorious champions, who, with invincible courage and constancy stood up in defence of Christ and His doctrine.

As soon as he reached his fifteenth year, he made known his wishes to the Capuchin fathers, pleading his cause with all the earnestness of fervour. But Heaven had other designs in his regard. The fathers judged from his delicate complexion, that he would be unequal to the duties of the institute, and that if he attempted them, he would soon sink under them: they therefore positively refused to receive him, and though he redoubled his entreaties, they remained inflexible in their decision. Enamoured as he was of those institutes which are the most

rigid, in which that spirit of penance so strongly inculcated by our Divine Lord, is most exactly observed, he renewed his attempt to gain admission into one or other of them at different times, and in different places, but always in vain. The guide of his conscience at length prevailed on him to make up his mind to remain in the world, since these various repulses clearly proved that such was the will of God, and he was soon afterwards fully certified of this, for one night when he was completely immersed in contemplation, his crucified Lord visibly appeared to him, and expressly commanded him to remain in the world, in order to establish a pious congregation that should tenderly instruct the roughest and most uncultivated class of persons in the mysteries and duties of our holy religion. Ippolito was fully convinced that the most certain proof of our love for God, is to carry willingly that yoke which He Himself imposes on us; he, therefore, humbly bowed his head to the Divine dispensations, and entirely gave up all idea of cloistered solitude.

If, before he had clearly ascertained the designs of Providence with regard to his future life, Ippolito was so fervently devoted to the exercises of piety and religion, we may easily imagine how much his fervour increased after the event above alluded to. Not to fail in any of his ordinary duties, he deprived his debilitated limbs of their necessary rest. His zeal in the discharge of his office of teacher of the Christian doctrine, became more fervent and ac-

tive, his communions became more frequent, his prayers more assiduous, accompanied with more inflamed charity, and more solid devotion.

The devil seeing that Ippolito persevered unflinchingly in his career of sanctity, and that, not content with attending to his own sanctification, he would also extend his zeal to the spiritual welfare of others, strove to give him a check by setting all his malicious artifices at work, and managed so well, that irreprehensible as was the life of the young man, his family began to treat him with great severity and harshness. So exact and so economical was he of his time, that after employing the greater part of it in silk weaving, he spent the little remaining portion of it in his room, in devout prayer or spiritual reading, or some other practice of piety. Instead of approving this virtuous conduct, and rejoicing to see his son thus rapidly advancing in the paths of sanctity, his father was annoyed at these retiring habits, and, instigated by the devil, he expressed himself dissatisfied at the fair amount of work which his son daily executed, and began to abuse him in a most unjustifiable manner; the pious youth was not dismayed; in gentle terms he requested that his father would himself fix the quantity of work which he was to complete in the course of each week; the harsh father willingly agreed to this. Our Lord did not fail to assist His servant in a most special manner, so that, in addition to the regular task assigned him, he was able to accomplish yet more, and this little over-

plus being of course at his own disposal, was expended on pious books and such articles of clothing as were necessary. His father was utterly astonished when he found that, notwithstanding the extra amount of work which he had imposed upon him, he still had time to devote to his usual exercises of piety, and was unreasonable enough to break his own terms: he renewed his abuse, even using blows, and laid claim to all that he could earn by his work. For a long time Ippolito submitted to the trial which God was pleased to make of his humility and patience, until at last he became victorious, for his father saw his own error, and even offered excuses for it.

Although the mind of the youth had remained firm and undisturbed amidst this storm, his delicate constitution sunk under it. Oppressed by all this labour, so far beyond his age and strength, a dangerous fever seized him, which, in a very short time, reduced him to extremity, and he was unable to take any nourishment. The doctor despaired of his cure, declaring his case to be beyond the reach of medical skill, and recommended him to receive the holy Viaticum. Ippolito received his dear Lord in His sacrament with such devotion and affection, as to move the hearts of all who were around him. He, who promises to be with the just in their tribulations, to draw them out of them, and glorify them, raised up His servant out of this infirmity. After the administration of the Viaticum, he requested to be left alone for some time,

that he might give full vent to the tender affections of his heart, whilst the divine Guest was still reposing in his breast. On returning to his room, his friends found him restored to health and strength, so much so, that in the course of a few days he was able to quit the house, and resume his usual duties.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

HE IS ELECTED SUPERIOR OF THE CONGREGATION IN  
S. LUCIA. HIS ZEAL FOR SOULS. MARVELLOUS FRUIT  
OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

THE brilliant example of virtue displayed by Ippolito, his experience and talent for teaching children the maxims of our holy religion, induced Bernardo Rutilensi, a pious and religious man, to propose giving up the charge he held, (that of guardian to the congregation of S. Lucia,) and to bestow it on Ippolito, being convinced that the presidency of so holy a youth would lead to good results, both to the confraternity and to the faithful in general. However great may have been the zeal of Ippolito, however ardent his desires for the salvation of souls, he could not but protest that such a charge was far superior to his powers, and declined the offer, humbly thanking the good Rutilensi: at length, he began to yield in some degree to the many reasons in favour of the plan, adduced by the latter; but still declared that he could

not consent to accept so difficult an office, unless he were allowed sufficient time to try and ascertain the will of God in this important affair. Rutilonsi admired and highly commended his great prudence and humility: a month was allowed for the deliberation, during which he incessantly implored the light of heaven, and humbly appealed to the judgment and prudence of his director. Before the expiration of the prescribed time, the will of God was clearly manifested by repeated inspirations, and by the wise counsels of judicious persons. At the age therefore of seventeen, Ippolito accepted the government of this pious confraternity, to the great satisfaction of all its members. Ambition, which but too frequently is the spring that sets the generality of mankind in motion, had no influence over him on this occasion. Zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, were the only objects to which he directed his every aim, and according to this did he accept and discharge his new duties. Never had the congregation been blessed with a more indefatigable, a more prudent guide. He increased the spirit of union, fervour, and charity, using his best endeavours to renew amongst the brethren the spirit of the primitive Christians, who were all of one heart and one soul. But his most ardent wish was to stem the torrent of almost universal corruption, which was ravaging his country, by attempting the conversion of those multitudes of unfortunate beings, who, enslaved by sin and hardened in vice, then peopled the



city of Florence. For this purpose he redoubled his fervent prayers, continually beseeching our Lord that He would deign to confer on him the power necessary for so arduous an undertaking, as that of leading so many stray souls, into the straight path of virtue. To this object he applied the frequent fasts, the rough hair shirts, and the severe disciplines, with which he so often punished his body. Wearied as he was by his day's work, he defrauded himself nevertheless of necessary repose, allowing himself only three hours' sleep, that he might devote the remainder of the night to spiritual reading; knowing that he could best draw from thence those efficacious lights which would enable him to lead his erring brethren back to the safe fold of Jesus Christ. Ippolito himself was a light, which Divine mercy suffered to shine over the city of Florence, to disperse the dark clouds of vice and error. To secure so desirable a fruit as that of the conversion of souls, the pious youth believed two things to be most necessary: 1st, to infuse light into the mind; 2nd, to edify by good example. In effect, no means can be better calculated to guide the blind followers of the world into the right path, than to dispel the ignorance of the intellect, without which the will would be averse to embrace what is good; and to remove by the force of example, the scandal of evil-doers, who are all the more apt to think they may lawfully do wrong, when they see but few persons, whose rectitude of conduct is a tacit censure of their own misdeeds. Ippolito hav-

ing obtained the necessary permission to instruct his brethren, chose, as the subject of his first discourse, these words from the canticle of Zachary, "To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death: to direct our steps in the ways of peace;" we can give but a faint idea of the power with which he treated them: in lively colours he depicted the deplorable state of an unhappy sinner, and next adduced the most suitable means of rising from it: many were the persons who wept at his words; and though immersed in vice, changed their conduct, detested the maxims of sin; and, as in the days of the apostles, the world became changed, and the devil was vanquished, so too at this fortunate epoch, Florence saw her sons reform their conduct, and pursue the path of virtue.

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## CHAPTER V.

HE REFORMS THE RULES OF THE CONGREGATION, AND INTRODUCES NEW EXERCISES OF PIETY. HIS CARE IN PROVIDING FOR THE WANTS OF THE POOR, ESPECIALLY ABANDONED YOUNG MEN.

TWICE a month the confraternity of S. Lucia met together; it had been first instituted for the purpose of accompanying the blessed Sacrament, when conveyed to the sick of that parish. As soon as the government of it was consigned to Ippolito, he directed his anxious cares to this object, insisting much on it in the new spiritual

exercises, intended to lead to a reform by means of wise rules, adapted to promote Christian piety. Being sensible that rules are the springs which nourish and maintain fervour of spirit, he strongly urged his brethren to the exact observance of them. On all festivals, he would have them assemble in the morning, at mid-day, and in the evening. From the custom which he introduced of meeting together three hours before day, the brothers obtained the name of "the vigil-keepers of S. Lucia," this time was spent in singing the divine office, and in other pious prayers, chiefly in favour of the dead, in preparing for holy communion, which was received by the whole confraternity on the second Sunday of each month. By way of honouring the dolorous Passion and death of our Redeemer, Ippolito required the brothers to assemble every Friday night, he himself making them a suitable discourse, and then spending some time in holy meditation, after which followed the exercise of Christian mortification, commonly styled the discipline. The laudable custom of reciting the divine office already existed in the congregation, but Ippolito was anxious that the chanting of it should be more slow and solemn, that so the mind might be better able to attend to the words: this method being somewhat lengthy, displeased the parish priest, who publicly censured it, and sharply reproved Ippolito, who, far from resenting this behaviour, suffered it with unalterable patience, and afterwards spoke most respectfully on the subject to the priest, so proving

to him the advantages of the method, that he was completely convinced of his mistake, and deplored his rash proceeding.

The zeal of Ippolito was not confined to this alone, he introduced many other admirable regulations, in addition to which, he used his best endeavours to draw his neighbour from evil, and to promote his spiritual advantage in every possible way. Having no competent persons to co-operate with him in this holy object, he used on festivals to go alone through all corners of the city, in search of children, and young or old people, who, addicted to gambling, spent those very days most specially dedicated to the worship of God, in vice and idleness, to the fearful prejudice of their own souls. His extremely pleasing manners gained the heart, and generally insured him the victory. By the same means too he won many persons to the congregation, and being still more assisted by grace, he succeeded in training some of the brothers according to his own plan, and they were then able to relieve him of some portion of his labours. He prescribed a certain charge to each of these assistants; but recommended all to have a special care of the poorest amongst the people, because generally speaking, they are the least attended to; and to those youths who were the most immersed in debauchery and dissipation. Above all things, he exhorted these his co-operators, by the tender bowels of Jesus Christ, to cherish a perfect union amongst themselves, and to devote themselves entirely to the practice of the grand virtue of fra-

ternal charity ; indeed, most wonderful instances of it soon became manifest. It is incredible what an immense number of poor creatures, who had hitherto lived in utter ignorance of the mysteries of faith, were drawn to the church of S. Lucia by the pious followers of Ippolito, who sought them in every quarter of the city ; those who lounged idly about in the streets, learning how to offend God even before they knew Him ; those who, from being orphans, had no one to provide them with a holy education ; to these, and such as these, did Ippolito constitute himself the tender father, as well as the assiduous master, and the zealous sanctifier. When it happened that any depraved youths were moved by the good example of the brotherhood, and were induced to frequent the congregation, then it was that Ippolito employed every means suggested by his ardent charity to prevail on them to change their conduct, and embrace a more Christian mode of life. His first care was to cleanse them from the leprosy of sin. By degrees the number of these youths increased, insomuch that several priests were employed in receiving their general confessions. Taught by that superior light which assisted him, Ippolito was convinced that no conversions were sincere unless accompanied by a resolute perseverance in good, and by a firm purpose to avoid former dangers ; therefore, he most carefully watched over those who had, as it were, only taken the first step in the path of salvation. Either himself or others narrowly observed the secret proceedings of these youths,

and whenever there was occasion for it, he failed not to admonish and instruct them anew. He made it his study to keep them at a distance from the society of those whose conduct was not exemplary, and whose principles were opposed to the maxims of the Gospel. He often exhorted them to attend sermons, to frequent the sacraments on festivals, and daily to afford some little banquet to the mind, by reading a spiritual or pious book. The book which he most generally recommended for this purpose, was the "Imitation of Christ, by Thomas a Kempis," "The spirit of which," he used to say, "came down from heaven, so great is the sublimity of sentiment and the admirable unction which pervade the whole work." He so much valued this golden little book, that he always carried it about with him as a precious treasure, and his example in this respect was followed by the greater part of the congregation.

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## CHAPTER VI.

HIS AFFLICTION AT THE DEATH OF ONE OF HIS COMPANIONS. GOD SEVERELY TRIES HIS VIRTUE. HIS CONSTANCY. HE IS RECOMPENSED BY SPIRITUAL SWEETNESSES.

IPPOLITO was enjoying the sweet consolation of seeing the advantages arising from his labours in behalf of his neighbour, when our Lord was pleased to put his virtue to a severe trial. He

was tenderly attached to one of his faithful companions whose name was Giovanni; he was a youth of remarkable modesty, unwearied zeal, and was endowed with many other excellent qualities; Ippolito looked up to him as one of the future props of the congregation, but God had other designs upon him; his fair soul fled to heaven, whilst life was as yet but in its bloom. Ippolito bitterly deplored his loss, so great was his affliction that he would almost have yielded to complaints, if our Lord had not made him sensible of the impropriety of loving a creature to such an excess, as to allow the privation of it to disturb the soul, or plunge us into immoderate grief. His heavenly Father intended by this lesson, to keep him henceforth disengaged from all earthly affection; and teach him how to live in a state of perfect conformity with the Divine Will. "Although," said he, "a thousand tribulations should conspire to wage war on me at once, even if I beheld my own congregation a prey to the flames, not in the midst of all these fierce trials would my soul be too much disturbed or cast down." The sequel proved the constancy of this his resolution.

Great was the harvest gathered in that portion of the vineyard, cultivated by the unwearied zeal and fervent charity of Ippolito. The wily enemy of mankind foresaw his future losses, and set all his engines at work to destroy the vineyard, and oppose the virtue of its cultivator: he judged that the most certain means of damaging the good work would be to destroy that holy concord and

union, which Ippolito had so sedulously endeavoured to maintain amongst the brethren. By way of introducing a spirit of dissension, he suggested to the minds of some of them, that they would do well to forsake that congregation and found another, the rules of which should be less difficult, and more compatible with a worldly life. The heart of man is naturally so inclined to evil, that it willingly listens to those dangerous maxims which teach us that we may serve God in such a way as not wholly to renounce earthly delights. Several of the members, deceived by this flattering idea, quitted the congregation; and when Ippolito arrived there early one morning as usual, he found only five of the members assembled. Being informed that all the rest had agreed to leave him, under the erroneous notion of founding another congregation elsewhere; and seeing that the desertion of so many would almost be the ruin of his congregation, he who firmly purposed to seek help from Heaven alone in every emergency, did not, on the present occasion, yield to any alarm or desolation; full of confidence in God, he exclaimed, "O senseless creatures! how could you let yourselves be overcome by this hellish suggestion?" Then humbling himself beneath the hand of Him from whence this unexpected blow proceeded, he resigned himself fully to the divine will; and being asked by one of those inconsiderate brothers to advise him as to the expediency of accepting the office of governor in the new congregation, Ippolito modestly answered, that he had better



seek to ascertain the will of God, and to follow the counsel of the one who now governed him in his place. The infernal enemy, seeing that resignation to the will of God was so closely leagued with charity in the heart of Ippolito, began to wage formidable war upon him, by assailing him with fearful interior temptations; the first of these lasted for the space of four years, occasioning indescribable anguish of mind on the subject of faith; the other was no less terrible, was of longer duration, and was a temptation to despair. To these were added other trials of fortitude, to which our Lord would subject him, as heretofore he had subjected Abraham, Job, and others of His servants. He ceased to shed on him the abundant dew of His heavenly consolations, and it is from this, as we well know, that the souls of the just draw their sweetest nourishment and their soothing comfort in affliction. Hence his heart became barren as a rock; even spiritual exercises were distasteful to him, and insupportably wearisome; tears were his chief food, like unto the Royal Prophet; and humbling himself in spirit more and more before God, he frequently besought him not to reject him from His sight, but that He would deign again to open to Him the fountain of divine mercy. Ere very long his confidence in God secured him victory. The Lord heard the humble prayers of His servant, and in recompense of all the bitterness so patiently endured, He again poured upon him the sweetness of heavenly consolations.

On the morning of Christmas day, when Ippo-

lito received the holy communion, he experienced such a sensible sweetness of taste and fragrance, that he said it could not possibly have proceeded but from heaven: it so filled him with joy, that, like unto the apostle, he knew not how to describe it.

Once, on the solemn festival of our Lord's Ascension, as he was meditating on this mystery, after having communicated in the church of S. Giovanni, he was ravished in spirit, and was permitted to see his triumphant Lord, surrounded by an immense circle of most brilliant rays, precisely as He was, when, after His resurrection, He ascended to His heavenly kingdom, to take His seat at the right-hand of His eternal Father.

The following incident is still more singular, and happened in the above-named church, when he was one day attending to a sermon. He became completely immersed in the contemplation of heavenly things, and found himself suddenly overwhelmed with such an ineffable sweetness, that, unable to resist this plentitude of grace, he dissolved in tears of tenderness, and at the same time ruptured a vein in his breast, which would most certainly have deprived him of life, if a special grace had not promptly come to his assistance.

## CHAPTER VII.

HE IS ELECTED PERPETUAL GUARDIAN OF ANOTHER CONGREGATION. HIS CHARITY AND THAT OF HIS COMPANIONS IN A TIME OF SCARCITY. NEW TRIALS, AND HIS PATIENT ENDURANCE.

A FAITHFUL servant, who so well knew how to traffic with the talents so liberally bestowed on him by Providence, was in no danger of wasting his time in idleness. Our Lord, therefore, so disposed of things, that the congregation called of S. Salvatore, by unanimous consent, elected him to be their head and guardian. Ippolito acceded to their requests, and soon joined them, together with the few brothers who still remained constant in frequenting with him the primitive Institute of S. Lucia. Ippolito, however, would not entirely abandon the latter; being most anxious to keep up the usual custom of meeting together on Friday nights, to honour, as we have said, the dolorous passion and death of our Redeemer. On joining the new congregation, Ippolito devoted himself to acts of the most beautiful Christian virtues; especially that of assiduously instructing children, and young people in the more essential maxims of our holy religion, and in providing for the pious members of the congregation the salutary food of the word of God. In a word, so great and so brilliant was the display of his sublime virtue, that all the brethren were perfectly astonished at it, insomuch that at the ex-

piration of six months they elected him perpetual guardian; and all of them as far as possible strove to copy his example with such admirable fervour, that the spirit of the leader seemed to be transfused into them.

That such was the case, was clearly shown in the memorable famine of 1590. The poor inhabitants of the mountains and other places bordering on the city of Florence were starving for want of food, and hastened thither in crowds to seek relief. Being forbidden to enter the city, they remained outside the walls, presenting a miserable spectacle to the sight. It was at this moment of dreadful distress, that Ippolito made evident the sublime principle from whence he derived his active charity. Although he was as unprovided with necessaries as those unfortunate creatures themselves, he found means to relieve them more than his richer neighbours did, even out of their abundance: he frequently left himself without a morsel of food, to give it to these famishing beings. Having made himself their father and protector, he and his brethren incessantly traversed the city in quest of alms; and then loading himself with bread, vegetables, and meat, he passed through the city gates and appeased the craving hunger of the starving multitude. It was beautiful to see him prepare the food, and even feed such of them as required this help, exhorting them at the same time to the practice of patience, and instructing the ignorant in the principles of religion. Not less active was the charity of Ippolito and his pious co-operators

towards the citizens themselves: such of them as were in tolerable circumstances raised a fund, to be specially applied to the benefit of those persons whom hunger or necessity exposed to the danger of sacrificing their honour for the preservation of their life. Nor was he unmindful of those unfortunate creatures, who from being unable to discharge their debts, languished in a horrid prison, the victims of indiscreet and inhuman creditors. Some of the confraternity took those of the poor sick who were left without help into their own houses: others furnished relief to miserable fathers who were weeping over their famishing children; others took charge of widows and orphans; whilst all signalized themselves by their generous devotion to the good of their neighbour, and Ippolito continually incited them by his fervent exhortations. How powerful over the heart of man are profitable instructions seconded by the efficacy of good example! We must now, however, return to the trials of this apostolic man: the more brilliant and heroic are the actions of the servants of God, the more offensive are they to the depraved of heart. Only imagine! these very brethren, who two years before had unanimously elected Ippolito for their head and chief, and who loudly boasted of their acquisition, seeing now the great augmentation of the faithful, drawn to the institute by the fame of the holy man, rebelled against him. They were moved there-to by envy, which led them to view his conduct only through the medium of their own

passions. Wishing to discredit and depress him, they maliciously raised a report that Ippolito was aspiring to make himself master of the whole confraternity, without dependance on any body whomsoever; and that the institute would soon be utterly ruined through the inefficiency of its head, who was wasting its revenues. These refractory men strove to discredit him in a thousand different ways, inventing calumnies against his wise and prudent conduct; whilst the boldest and more intolerant amongst them overwhelmed him with abuse and threats. But the man who seeks God alone in all his undertakings, far from being cast down by opposition, only derives fresh courage and vigour therefrom. Ippolito remained undaunted amidst this fiery ordeal, merely raising his eyes to heaven and blessing the Lord. Such of the brethren as refused to join the wicked party, also came in for their share of bitter treatment. Ippolito exhorted them to the forgiveness of injuries, and himself earnestly prayed to God for the authors of his cross: he spoke to them always with patience and humility, hoping by gentleness of manner (so peculiar to himself) to disarm their inveterate rancour, but all in vain: the perverse set became more obstinate than ever, and redoubled their persecutions, which we will not relate in detail; the recital could only be painful both to the reader and to the narrator; the great wonder is, that he who suffered them, was never weary of his sufferings.

## CHAPTER VIII.

HE LEAVES THE CONGREGATION OF S. SALVATORE FOR THAT OF S. DOMENICO. THE MEMBERS OPPOSE HIM. HIS SWEETNESS OF MANNER. NEW DISSENSIONS. HIS ILLNESS AND MIRACULOUS CURE. HIS TEMPTATIONS.

THE tribulations to which Ippolito was subjected by these indocile and turbulent brethren, at length reached the ears of the Archbishop's vicar, who, to appease the disturbances and restore calm to the institute, repaired in person to the congregation on the first festival that occurred. His tumultuous adversaries at once stood forth to accuse Ippolito to the superior, but did this in so rude and unbecoming a manner, that the vicar was highly indignant with them. Ippolito stood there, calmly listening to their many unjust accusations, and with that heroic spirit of patience which is ever accompanied by other virtues, he did not utter a single word in his own defence, nor would he allow any one else to do so for him; on the contrary, he humbly placed himself on his knees before the vicar, presented the keys of the congregation to him, and made a renunciation of the office of guardian, protesting, however, that he had never been animated by any other desire than that of guiding souls to God. He then most earnestly entreated permission to withdraw from the congregation, convinced that nothing less than this

would appease those unruly minds which were so entirely blinded by passion; yet of whom he said, "they were most deserving of compassion on account of their ignorance and simplicity;" such is ever the revenge of the just. The vicar was exceedingly moved by the conduct of Ippolito, and was more and more confirmed in the conviction of his innocence, and he severely reprehended his audacious accusers, threatening them with due chastisement. That they might not be able to boast of any triumph over persecuted innocence, he would not then accept the resignation of Ippolito, insisting on his retaining the guardianship six months longer. It so happened that at this time the congregation of S. Domenico was divided into two distinct parties, in consequence of which the vicar resolved to issue a decree, prohibiting both parties to approach their place of meeting. He judged this to be a fitting opportunity to restore the servant of God to peace, so, sending for him, he explained his ideas, and added, that by removing him from his turbulent brethren, he thought he would be better able to employ himself in promoting the good of souls; that, with this view, he purposed committing the confraternity of S. Domenico to his charge. Ippolito was satisfied with a measure dictated by prudence, and gratefully thanked his superior. In the meantime, the brethren of S. Domenico, hitherto so grievously disunited, were terrified at the idea of being entirely excluded from their oratory, so to prevent any third party from taking



advantage of their rupture, they agreed to a reunion amongst themselves. However, on the very day Ippolito appeared amongst them, some of the bolder ones met him at the door of the oratory, and calling him a usurper, they loaded him with abuse and violent threats. Armed with his accustomed humility, he meekly answered them, explaining all the circumstances of the case, in such a manner as not only to appease and satisfy them, but even to move them to compunction, so much so, that one of them cast himself on his knees to make excuses, and they one and all welcomed him to his new appointment.

Though Ippolito succeeded in appeasing the angry passions of men, he did not pacify the infernal enemy, who set all his malicious artifices at work to disturb the peace and soul of the servant of God; he again assailed him with his usual arms, exciting quarrels and dissensions among his disciples, of whom more than forty alienated themselves from him. We may easily imagine how great must have been the grief and anguish of Ippolito, who was so anxious for the salvation of souls. But, resigned as usual, he continued, in spite of this unexpected blow, to pursue his pious exercises, without the slightest diminution of his zeal, and with even greater confidence than ever, in the assistance of Almighty God, who never deceives those who trust in Him. Whilst Ippolito was employing himself in the oratory assigned him, sedulously endeavouring to promote Christian piety, and discharg-

ing those duties connected with divine worship and public instruction appertaining to it, a violent fever seized him, accompanied by fatal symptoms ; in consequence, on the festival of the glorious apostle S. Peter, he received the holy Viaticum, and most fervently recommended his soul to the Divine Mercy. His poor penitential bed became on that day a pulpit, whence he practically preached patience, as well as the grand lesson, how to die the death of the just. He received the Viaticum with sentiments of tender Christian piety, and then the better to concentrate his whole soul on the object of his love, he requested to be left alone for some hours, and when afterwards his friends returned to him, he gave them to understand that he had slumbered for a time, in the course of which the glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, appeared to him, and touching him, said, "Arise, Ippolito, and join the congregation quickly, for such is the will of the Most High." In reality, however, this was no dream, for precisely at that moment, the servant of God was freed from all sign of malady, to the unspeakable astonishment of those who had so recently beheld him on the brink of the grave.

But our Lord, who would have him constantly fastened to the cross, permitted him to be afflicted with another sort of suffering. He began to be tormented by day and night by the malicious fiend with such filthy and obscene phantoms, that he at length became so tortured by them, as not to dare so much as cast his eyes on a pious picture, or any human being ; the

mind of Ippolito, however, had long been accustomed to combat and to conquer; under all these assaults, the loving arms of his crucified Lord afforded him a safe refuge; from Him did he confidently look for opportune succour. In effect, ere very long he came forth victorious from the conflict, and heavenly consolations recompensed him for his past sufferings, as is generally the case with just souls, after such severe and perilous encounters.

Nevertheless, our Lord, designing more and more to refine the virtue of His servant, again tried him by means of other corporal infirmities, these were a violent attack of sciatica, together with a perpetual fever, which created a humour that covered him from head to foot. The malady was long and dangerous, and the sufferings he underwent were most excessive. Being unable in this critical situation to attend to his ordinary work, he found himself reduced to absolute penury; to provide for his subsistence, he was obliged to despoil himself of the few contents of his poor cottage, so that he had nothing remaining but a few spiritual books, a very old image of the crucifix, and a miserable bed stuffed with chaff. Yet he never was heard to utter a word of complaint; his patient endurance and serenity of countenance, gave evidence of his peace of soul, and was indeed most admirable.

If any of his brethren now and then condoled with him, he would cast his eyes on his crucified Lord, and immediately say, "Let us not doubt, brother, but that God will aid His

own work; it ought not to seem wearisome to us, to suffer something for our loving Jesus, who did not hesitate to shed all His blood for our sakes." As soon as he could, with the assistance of his companions, quit the house, though by no means free from illness, he dragged himself to the congregation, and resumed his usual occupations for the good of souls. His charity, though patient to suffer, was impatient to work. Infirm and attenuated as he was, he preached both morning and evening on all festivals, with such zeal and fervour, that his discourses penetrated the heart, and drew tears from the eyes of all who heard him.

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## CHAPTER IX.

HE RETURNS TO HIS FIRST ORATORY AT S. LUCIA. HIS GREAT POWER IN PREACHING. FRUIT OF HIS SERMONS. CONVERSION OF TWO DISSOLUTE YOUTHS.

FOR two years Ippolito continued at the oratory of S. Domenico, labouring indefatigably to promote the spiritual advantage of his neighbour and the glory of God. But it seemed to be a decided point, that he was never to find a permanent resting-place; the brethren of S. Domenico were reinstated in their rights, quarrels had ceased, yet Ippolito found himself compelled to quit that congregation. His companions were extremely grieved, but he failed not to comfort them, encouraging them to con-

fide in Divine Providence, which would, said he, find out a place suited to the establishment of such a congregation, provided they, on their part, gave edification, and continued firm in the service of God. In fact, so great was his confidence of obtaining this favour some day or other, that he often spoke of it as a settled thing, describing the site and form of the building; and the issue proved precisely as he predicted, before the lapse of ten years.

Having quitted the oratory of S. Domenico, and having nowhere else to take refuge, he and his companions returned to the old locality of S. Lucia; where he devoted himself, if possible, more assiduously than ever in teaching the wholesome maxims of Christian morality, and in thundering forth zealous sermons against vice. It will not be deemed misplaced, perhaps, if I here say a word or two on the method he followed in delivering the word of God. Although, as we have said, he was uneducated, yet to hear him, one would have supposed that he had studied under the first masters of eloquence, and had learnt from them the best method of convincing the intellect, and of moving the will. Many trustworthy witnesses deposed that his sermons were a compound of sacred eloquence, of efficacious reasoning, of powerful effects, and, above all, of ardour of spirit; so that when listening to him he might have been taken for a Xavier in the Indies. Having chosen for the subject of his discourse some touching Gospel truth, for instance, the absolute necessity of penance, the

fearful risk of those who defer it until death, the grievousness of mortal sin, the rigours of Divine justice, or the inexplicable torments of hell, (all subjects calculated to arouse those who rested in the deadly sleep of mortal sin,) he next entered upon more particular details, inveighing against those more prevalent vices, such as ruining souls by scandals, concealing sins in confession out of shame, fomenting enmities and hatred, depriving others of their goods, or of their good fame, and taking part in such games as give rise to dishonesty or other sins: he concluded his discourse with some fervent colloquy to our Lord, exciting all to beg pardon for their offences, and to promise amendment and perseverance. The more effectually to excite this, he gave the example, with profound humility, proclaiming himself the greatest of sinners; sometimes with a contrite heart he implored pardon for sins he had never committed; sometimes inflamed with zeal, he purposed aloud to live in the love and holy fear of God. These were the ordinary topics of his discourses, this was the admirable way in which he administered the divine word, of which, moreover, we purpose later to give a more minute account.

It would be impossible to describe the great advantages derived by souls from his exertions. The fame of his indefatigable zeal became more and more widely spread: people went in crowds to hear him, and being touched by his words, they were humbled and contrite; many even dissolved in tears. The oratory of S. Lucia being

too small to contain the multitudes that flocked to hear him, it was judged advisable for him to cast the net of salvation in some of the more spacious churches. It seemed as if the spirit of Paul as he preached at Athens had been infused into Ippolito: every one was moved and softened by the burning, the impetuous eloquence of which he gave such brilliant instances. It would occupy too much of our time, if we undertook to enumerate the individuals, who, disenchanted of the world by his words, sought refuge in the cloister, there to embrace a religious, and more perfect form of life; or how many, disengaged from earthly interests, fell at his feet after listening to him, declared their crimes, and applied themselves henceforth to the practice of solid virtue. From amongst many others, we shall select two of the more remarkable incidents.

A pious youth, a member of the congregation, had a brother named Matteo, who led a life of deplorable dissipation; this was a source of great affliction to the former, who, like a good brother, often endeavoured to draw him into the right path, inviting him to accompany him to the congregation to hear the servant of God preach, because his sermons were so efficacious as to have persuaded many to enter upon a Christian course of conduct, but vain were all the endeavours of the pious youth to withdraw his misguided brother from the snares of the devil, in which he was so miserably entangled. Swearing, debauchery, merry-making, slander, and

scandal were all familiar to him, and associated with a set of licentious companions, he abandoned himself to every sort of excess, in a word, to a system that was altogether evil, and which by tyrannizing over his mind and heart, held him perpetually on the brink of a precipice. One summer's evening as the two brothers were at supper together, the pious young man compassionating more than ever the deplorable condition of the other, resolved to make another attempt upon him, and entreated him for that one only evening to accompany him to the congregation: the unhappy man was so enraged at this friendly invitation, that he loaded his brother with injuries, and seizing a loaf off the table, hurled it at his head: the good youth was silent under this uncalled-for outrage, and thinking it more prudent to quit the room, he repaired at once to the congregation, where, in deep affliction, he warmly recommended his wayward brother to the Divine mercy: his prayers reached the throne of the Eternal One, who deigned to recompense the admirable virtue of his zealous and pious servant, for at that very time the heart of the straying young man was so powerfully touched, that descending the stairs in all haste, he ran after his brother to make excuses for his offence, and to seek a reconciliation. On arriving at the entrance of the oratory, he heard Ippolito who was preaching utter these words, "Matteo, when wilt thou be converted?" The young man was so startled at these words, that, unable to resist the impulse of grace, he exclaimed aloud,



“Now! I will be converted now!” He then cast himself on the ground, and remained there a long time plunged in grief; he was, in effect, truly penitent. Overpowered with emotion, his brother burst into a flood of tears, and both, together with the surrounding spectators, returned thanks to the divine Majesty, who in all times is wonderful in the conversion of sinners. The converted youth failed not to correspond faithfully with divine grace, and renouncing the false attractions of the world, he soon afterwards joined the Capuchin Fathers, and ended his days holily.

No less admirable was another conversion wrought by God through the means of Ippolito, in favour of a youth, who, like the former, was addicted to a life of debauchery: it happened that one evening as he was going to a house of iniquity and abomination, he passed the oratory precisely whilst the brethren were assembled there, to commemorate the Passion of our Lord: impelled by a motive of curiosity, he stopped to listen to Ippolito who was preaching. But God, who so benignly watches over the steps of sinners, changed the occasion of evil into a remedy of salvation. The porter seeing him waiting at the threshold of the oratory, cleverly contrived to draw him into the church at the very moment the brethren were taking the discipline: the youth was surprised and disconcerted, both by the darkness of the place and the sound of the blows; and felt quite impatient for the moment when he should be able to quit a place of so much horror; but before he could

effect his retreat, Ippolito had begun, in his usual style of vehemence, to unfold the chief articles of the divine law, depicting in lively colours the severe chastisements of eternal justice, which would inevitably fall on those who transgressed them: his words were like so many arrows in the heart of the depraved youth; who contemplating in this fearful picture the deplorable state of his own soul, immediately conceived a lively horror of his misdeeds. He was revolving these things in his mind amidst a thousand perplexing resolutions, when our Lord so disposing it for his good, Ippolito raising his voice, exclaimed, "O thou who now hearkenest to me, why dost thou delay thy conversion? When wilt thou resolve on a change of life? shall it be to-morrow? But, if God should this night snap asunder the thread of life, before thou hast repented, what will become of thee, miserable creature? Thou wouldest be plunged to the bottom of hell, there to be unceasingly tormented, and to curse God eternally. Obey the voice of God at once, calling upon thee as it does this very moment." Remorse assailed the youth as he was listening to these words; the perturbation of his mind was so violent, that the earth seemed to open beneath his feet, and hell to swallow him up: trembling and breathless, he ran, as if to escape, and embraced Ippolito, who had been the instrument of his repentant change. The good servant of God received him amicably, encouraged him to confide in the divine clemency, and after consoling him in some degree, he sent

him to his own house to avoid all commotion ; and by his instructions and advice, he soon brought his conversion to a happy conclusion. Under the skilful guidance of Ippolito, the youth made such spiritual progress as to be able to preserve himself from those slight failings, to which even just souls are liable. He survived his conversion four years, and ended his days in peace, and in the most enviable sentiments of Christian piety.

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## CHAPTER X.

HE IS ELECTED GUARDIAN OF THE CONGREGATION OF S. LORENZINO. HE ASSUMES THE GOVERNMENT, BUT IS SOON COMPELLED TO RETIRE. BY MEANS OF SOME PIOUS INDIVIDUALS A PLACE IS ASSIGNED HIM, WHERE HE REAPS GREAT FRUIT. FRESH DISTURBANCES, TRIALS, AND CONSOLATIONS.

It was now well understood in Florence, that Ippolito desired nothing, and showed himself solicitous about nothing, but the promotion of a true spirit of Christian piety in the soul of his neighbour. Attracted by the sweet odour of his virtue, the brethren of S. Lorenzino repaired to him, spontaneously offering him their congregation, entreating him to accept the office of their head and director. Ippolito being well aware that they were provided with a spacious place, in which the faithful would be able conveniently to practise their religious duties, was

grateful for the courteous offer, but being rendered cautious by past experience, he was unwilling to accede to the invitation, unless the brethren would first promise to observe his rules; after maturely examining them, they accepted the conditions, and elected him, by a plurality of voices, to be their head. However, it seems that God would afflict the heart of His servant with some fresh tribulation in everything he undertook. Notwithstanding all his precautions, scarcely had they held their first meeting, at which there was a general communion in thanksgiving for this benefit, than Ippolito saw to his surprise, that the brethren had changed their minds; they cited him before the Archbishop's tribunal, representing his election as illegitimate. Being convinced of the inconstancy of these men, Ippolito immediately withdrew from them, and returned with his companions to the old oratory of S. Lucia.

In less than a month from this time, Canon Niccolo Martini, to whom the Cardinal Archbishop of Florence had warmly recommended Ippolito, and whom he had charged to encourage the pious works, resolved to provide him with a more suitable and less confined locality. He wrote accordingly to his Eminence, who was then at Rome, stating, that with a view to gratify the servant of God, he was thinking of assigning him the oratory of S. Sebastiano, commonly called de' Bini. The Cardinal Archbishop approved the idea, and applying to the Commendatore di Santo Spirito, to whom the right of

the locality belonged, he obtained his consent for Ippolito and his companions to establish themselves there. At this transplanting of the congregation, the servant of God exulted with a holy joy. His zeal was unusually animated, and the fervour of spirit which beamed in his face, seemed, as it were, to transfuse the bright flame which burned in his own breast, into the bosoms of others. Most fervent in those days were the tears and sighs which he wafted to the throne of the Most High, to obtain the spirit of concord and all abundant blessings on the pious congregation. We know, that not content with his daily exercises of devotion, at night, when the others were enjoying their rest, he remained watching, absorbed in prayer, imploring grace for himself and others. Nor were his holy hopes deceived ; the number, both of the brethren and of the persons frequenting the congregation, increased to such a degree, that notwithstanding their ample space, many were often obliged to remain outside the oratory and listen at the door whilst he discoursed. Ippolito now seemed to have reached the summit of happiness. Established altogether in a free and spacious place, surrendered to them by one who had full right over it, they had now nothing to fear from any one. But God would still adorn his crown, brilliant as it was, with the additional gems of magnanimous endurance. All at once, turbulence and discord arose among the brethren themselves, but as these were speedily appeased through the prudence of Ippolito, to the great discomfiture

and fury of the devil, that spiteful enemy had recourse to another sort of artifice to check his saintly career, that of instigating a man, whose learning and zeal had gained him the universal esteem of the citizens of Florence, against Ippolito. This man was a venerable cloistered monk, who, imposed on by calumny, was prejudiced against the congregation and against him who presided over it; and under the idea of rendering good service to God, he began to exert all his influence for the destruction of this meritorious institute. As many persons repaired to him for confession, he charged all his penitents, as well as the directors and guardians of other congregations, to keep every one as much as possible from the congregation of Ippolito, which he called a conventicle of wicked people, governed by a hypocrite and vagabond. Not satisfied with this, he publicly condemned the holy work, believing it better to destroy it at once, than allow it to continue creating new disorders. This blow all but ruined Ippolito in the opinion of the people; but the wisdom of God, which can extract its antidote even from the very poison itself, so permitted, that the monk should soon be disabused of his erroneous opinion, and he at once publicly retracted all that he had previously said, owning it to have been occasioned by a mistaken ill-informed zeal; he, moreover, obliged those whom he had induced to blame Ippolito, to retract all their false statements, and then hastened to the servant of God to beg his pardon for so many offences, protesting that he

would henceforth co-operate as far as possible to the progress and benefit of his confraternity ; and he kept his word.

No sooner was this storm calmed, than the devil raised another no less terrible. For some time past Ippolito had been giving his special attention to the care of young boys, to prevent their wandering about the streets after the accustomed devotional exercises ; to effect this, he took them altogether with him, to a retired place beyond the city walls, where he allowed them to amuse themselves in innocent recreation. Bowls was the game they most generally selected, and even in this Ippolito had an eye to the spiritual welfare of his children, fixing it, as a rule, that instead of exacting money, the winners should oblige the losers to recite some short prayers by way of suffrage for the souls in purgatory. Surely no boyish amusement could be more harmless or more meritorious ; yet strange to say, there were people in the city, (we know not whether from ignorance or malice,) who censured this proceeding, and who went so far as to give unfavourable reports of it to a famous orator who was then preaching the Lent in one of the principal churches of Florence. One day he publicly inveighed against the congregation, stigmatizing it as "the harbour of people addicted to gambling ;" of people, who having squandered their property, went so far as to make an indecent merchandise of the most holy things. His words produced the most pernicious effects ; many of the parents

resolved to withdraw their children from the congregation; adults too, refrained from going, so strong was the impression caused by the public invectives of this famous, but ill-informed preacher. Ippolito, deeply distressed by this almost general desertion, consulted the Archbishop's vicar, who sent for the orator, and plainly gave him to understand how high an opinion he had of Ippolito, for that in all his undertakings, his sole object was the spiritual advantage of his neighbour, and that what he did was fully approved of by the Archbishop. The learned preacher was much mortified and confounded at hearing all this; in the course of the following days, he informed the people that he had committed a serious mistake; publicly extolled the meetings held by Ippolito, and all that was there done for the glory of God and the good of souls. The devil, seeing that he had lost where he hoped to gain so much, would show his rabid fury at the very moment the preacher was contradicting his previous ill-advised statements, by agitating a woman that was possessed, and who happened to be present at the discourse: her screams and contortions terrified the persons assembled there, the very pavement shook, and the doors of the church rattled with a loud noise. The spectators sought safety in flight, loudly invoking the name of Jesus. In his endeavours to appease the tumult, the astonished preacher exerted his voice to such a degree, as to become absolutely hoarse, and for some days afterwards was unable to perform the functions of his ministry. Thus was God



pleased to reward the virtue of His servant, who from henceforward was suffered to persevere in his laudable and salutary exercises.

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## CHAPTER XI.

BY THE ADVICE OF THE PHYSICIANS IPPOLITO GOES TO THE BATHS OF PISA. HIS HEALTH IS GREATLY BENEFITED. THE SPIRITUAL AIDS HE AFFORDS HIS NEIGHBOUR.

IPPOLITO still continued to suffer from the malignant humour, which covered him from head to foot, as we have already related. His doctor had tried every remedy which he deemed suited to the case and to the constitution of the patient, though without success; therefore, not to make himself responsible for the loss of a life so precious, he advised him to try the famous baths of Pisa, considered highly efficacious in such complaints. Ippolito obeyed the doctor's recommendation, and derived the greatest advantage from it. Whilst using these famous baths which removed his corporal malady, he took care to devote himself, as far as possible, to the spiritual cure of his neighbour. Many others like himself, were attracted to the baths in hopes of restoration to health; and a sort of amicable intercourse naturally arose amongst such a number of strangers: the necessity of seeing one another in loose or disarranged apparel, sometimes gave rise to unbecoming expressions; nor

were those wanting, who under pretext of amusement, or of driving away care, abandoned themselves to an unbridled license. Ippolito was inexpressibly grieved at witnessing anything of this sort, so diametrically opposed to his own purity of heart. Being unable from poverty to engage a place apart for himself, which his richer neighbours could do, he kept himself in a corner of the bath, in as close retirement as he could, where he strove to forget all sensible objects, by firmly fixing his mind on God, whom he earnestly implored to open the eyes of the profligate set, who made so little account of offending His Divine Majesty. Our Lord heard the fervent prayer of Ippolito, and permitted his recognition by one of the visitors, who remembered him as being the great servant of God so much venerated at Florence, for his sanctity, and for his sermons: this individual requested him to address a few words to those who were then at hand; but the time and place seemed inopportune to Ippolito; so he dexterously spoke to him on the importance of saving his own soul, demonstrating the difficulty of the task, and enkindled in him an ardent desire of prevailing on his acquaintances to go with him and hear Ippolito discourse on spiritual things; and in effect, they did assemble for this purpose, when the servant of God drew up before their eyes some fearful examples of divine justice, reminding them that its most poignant arrows often fell unexpectedly on the heads of sinners. His words did not fall on a rock or amidst thorns;

but on a soil well softened by the grace of God. His audience deplored their transgressions, corrected themselves at once, and thanked Ippolito a thousand times, since through his means they had learned to change immoral discourse for such as was pious, and disorderly behaviour for such as was Christian, modest, and edifying. As soon as this became known, the servant of God rose in public esteem and veneration, inso-much that he was requested to deliver a moral discourse in one of the neighbouring churches, to gratify and improve the people. This request was quite enough to enkindle all his zeal for the benefit of souls. At the appointed time, the young and old, the learned and unlearned, the inhabitants of the city and of the country, mingled together in crowds to go and hear the new apostle, who, though unskilled in human literature, was assisted in such a manner by supernal illustration, that his lips were never at a loss for words of wisdom. Overflowing with holy zeal, he reminded his hearers of their duty as Christians; the obligation they were under of complying with it; the superabundant recompense prepared for those who did so; and, on the other hand, the fearful chastisements which would fall on those, who, unmindful thereof, abandoned themselves to sin. All who heard him were astonished at the admirable manner in which this man, all burning with charity, had addressed them. After leaving the church, some became reserved and cautious in their mode of speech; others entirely forsook the infamous

habits to which they had been addicted ; some gave themselves to the frequentation of the sacraments ; others appropriated a certain portion of their income to the benefit of the poor ; all, in fine, detested their past evil ways, and adopted an exemplary line of conduct. Such were the results which our Lord permitted to ensue—such the power which He imparted to the ardent words of Ippolito : it was moreover the reward of that zeal which made him so energetic in striving to recall souls into the straight path of virtue.

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## CHAPTER XII.

HE RETURNS TO FLORENCE.    ENDURES MANY TRIALS.  
GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS NECESSITIES IN A MARVEL-  
LOUS WAY.    HIS INCREASE OF ZEAL FOR THE CON-  
VERSION OF SINNERS.

THE baths of Pisa having restored Ippolito to his ordinary state of health, he soon returned to his native home, where new subjects of affliction were awaiting him. Within a brief space of time, death deprived him of his father ; and in a season of extreme scarcity, he found himself left with the charge of supporting the whole family : for this purpose he redoubled his exertions, and toiled night and day : in connexion with this subject, a singular circumstance occurred, whether through the instrumentality of the infernal enemy, or otherwise, we know not, but at all events it did so happen that at the end of his task of work,

an essential deficiency was found in the weight of the silk which he had received from his employer to weave. There were people malicious enough to circulate the report that Ippolito had taken the liberty of appropriating it to his own advantage. Being jealous of his honour, and being desirous, moreover, of removing every occasion of similar slander for the future, he resolved to abandon his trade of weaver, and apply himself to some other, even though it might be less lucrative, and so repair the outrage upon charity, inflicted by the malevolent. In consequence of his change of profession, he had the heart-felt grief of witnessing the still greater straits to which his family was daily reduced: to complete his anguish in the midst of all this penury, he was obliged to undertake the payment of a debt formerly contracted by his father, and though it did not exceed the sum of seventy crowns, it was nevertheless a heavy addition to his already existing burthen. The creditors paid little or no regard to his inability to meet the demand, and daily distressed him by the renewal of their claims. In deep anguish of mind, he left his house one morning to go and hear mass as usual in the neighbouring church; and with the intention too of imploring light from heaven, that he might see and follow the Divine will, with regard to an idea which then occupied him of quitting Florence and going to establish himself at Bologna, in the hope of increasing his gains, and being thus able to satisfy his creditors: on his way to the church, he met Guglielmo Gambini, a

man of an extremely kind and benevolent heart, who had that morning felt himself extraordinarily inspired to perform some act of charity, though he could not determine to whom, or in what manner it was to be done ; meanwhile a certain irresistible impulse led him through the same street as Ippolito, on whom he no sooner cast his eyes than he felt an inclination to accost him, which he did in a very friendly tone, and inquired whether he stood in need of any assistance ? The more reluctant the servant of God seemed to be in exposing his miseries, the more did the other urge him to be free and candid : at length Ippolito yielded and gave an exact account of his position and of the restricted circumstances of his family : Gambini was deeply moved at the recital ; "This," said he, "is the unfortunate individual whom Providence intends me to succour this morning ! Be consoled, Ippolito," said he, "Almighty God brought me hither on purpose to assist thee : expose all thy debts to me, no matter what they are." Ippolito availed himself of so courteous an offer, and gave a minute detail of his embarrassments, whereupon Gambini generously gave him a full sufficiency to discharge them all ; nor was he satisfied with this, he provided for the immediate wants of the family, by sending a supply of seventy bushels of flour. It would seem as if Almighty God had reduced his servant to this extremity of misery, that He might afterwards have the opportunity of rewarding his admirable patience. He gratefully thanked the Divine Majesty, and studied henceforth to serve

He laboured more fervently than ever, especially by labouring in the salvation of souls, and the reformation of sinners.

Amongst the numerous conversions effected chiefly through his means, we will relate two of the most remarkable, which excited the astonishment of all Florence: a gentleman of rank in the city kept up a scandalous connexion, to the fearful injury of his own soul: an intimate friend of his, belonging to the congregation of Ippolito, often entreated him to go and hear the servant of God preach; the gentleman paid no attention to the advice, treating it as mere idle nonsense. His good friend, however, did not lose courage, but waited for a more favourable opportunity, and then renewed his entreaties; overcome by this holy importunity, he agreed to accompany his friend to the oratory, where Ippolito was preaching upon this text: "To-day, if you shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts:" and at the moment the two friends entered, he was deploring the blindness of those unfortunate beings, who, deaf to the divine summons, procrastinate their conversion, and expose themselves to the risk of everlasting destruction: "And will you," exclaimed the servant of God, "be like unto those of whom the prophet Isaias speaks, as having made a close alliance with death, and as having made a compact even with hell? On what basis do you found your hopes? on mere flowers, a shadow, a vapour, smoke! for in no other terms does the Holy Spirit speak of human life." It would be impossible to describe the emotions of the guilty

gentleman as he listened to these words, issuing from a heart inflamed with charity ; let it suffice to say, that he was truly penitent ; he burst forth in sighs and groans as he reflected on his past life : he sincerely promised Almighty God to amend, to detest the sins he had been guilty of, and, in effect, he showed that his good purposes were neither vacillating nor weak. On returning to his own house, his first care was to dismiss the wretched accomplice of his guilt, and he spent the whole of that night weeping bitterly for his sins : on the following morning he purified his conscience by means of a sincere general confession ; and being anxious to withdraw from the turmoils and dangers of the world, the better to attend to heavenly things, he soon afterwards repaired to Fiesoli, where he humbly solicited and received the religious habit in the reformed order of S. Francesco, where he lived and died holily.

No less remarkable was the conversion of a woman, a notorious public sinner ; and her conversion, under God, was due to our Ippolito ; she resided in a house directly opposite to his ; and strove by her dangerous charms to allure incautious youths within the influence of her snares. Ippolito burned with a holy ardour to gain over this stray soul to God, and employed a stratagem for this purpose, such as could only be suggested by Christian charity. He purposely placed himself at his window, holding in his hands a picture of the Crucifixion in a bright handsome frame ; but which at a little distance might, from the manner in which he held it,



easily be mistaken for a looking-glass. The lady, deceived by the appearance, began to suppose that Ippolito was admiring himself; astonished at such a circumstance, she remained with great curiosity watching the result. As soon as the servant of God thought his bait had taken, he suddenly turned the frame, and threw the adorable image directly in sight of the unfortunate woman, so that she might fix her eyes attentively upon it; petrified, as it were, by this unexpected act, she experienced a strange interior emotion which overcame her; grace was working within her, she humbly and earnestly besought the servant of God to lend her that sacred picture, that she might view and consider it more at leisure. Ippolito, who knew by the Divine inspiration, the wonderful change wrought in her by our Lord, exulted in his heart, and willingly acceded to her request, at the same time beseeching our Lord to perfect His own good work. Nor were his hopes deceived. From that time forward the erring woman entirely changed her course of life, and being strengthened by the counsels and admonitions of Ippolito, she persevered faithfully in virtue, until the end of her days.

## BOOK II.

## CHAPTER I.

IPPOLITO BUILDS A NEW ORATORY BY MEANS OF AN ALMS. REMARKABLE EVENT WHICH OCCURRED ON THE FIRST MEETING HELD IN IT.

THE good works of Ippolito became noted throughout Florence: every one was convinced, that neither roads, seasons, toils, want of rest, or even serious illness, could check the impetuous course of his charity; hence, some of the more wealthy among the pious citizens, moved by Christian edification, voluntarily offered to advance a sum for the construction of a more spacious oratory, to be built in such place and form as Ippolito should think best. As soon as the generous project became known, every one approved, every one praised, every one rejoiced thereat; but Ippolito himself was the one who was most happy on the occasion. He congratulated himself and his associates, that at last they were to have a sure asylum, after having been so long tossed about, undergoing so many toils and difficulties.

Being above all things anxious for the advantage of the poor, to whom he was so affection-

ately devoted, he resolved to place his oratory in the midst of their locality, that, so being encouraged by the close vicinity, they might repair thither in crowds, and be taught the maxims of religion. A part of the garden belonging to the Franciscans, was therefore appropriated to the purpose, a plan was drawn, and the building was begun on the 14th of October, 1602. Ippolito wished the oratory to take its title from S. Lucia, in whose church the congregation had originated, but the then reigning Pontiff, Clement VIII., for some reason or other, would have the foundation stone laid in the name of the seraphical Father S. Francesco. Ippolito, however, succeeded so far as to obtain that the glorious virgin and martyr S. Lucia should be honoured as co-patroness of the congregation, that a special commemoration of her should be made in their office, and that her festival should be solemnly celebrated by them. On due application to the above-named Pontiff, he conceded the spiritual treasures of indulgences, which were afterwards amplified by Pope Paul V. Amongst other incidents tending to show how this martyred virgin protected the pious undertaking, we select only the following: The general Congregation of Rites, held during the pontificate of the immortal Benedict XIV., had removed all doubt upon the heroicity of the virtues of the servant of God; but his Holiness deemed it adviseable to postpone the publication of the decree for a short time, that more accurate diligence might be used in an affair of such high importance, and to wait

with humility of heart for the assistance of Almighty God, who, by the splendour of His brightness, illuminates the minds of men, and guides them unto truth, according to the promise of His Divine Son. Reflecting, however, on the fervent affection and devotion with which the servant of God had through life honoured the glorious Virgin and martyr; and reflecting, moreover, that the foundation of his congregation had taken place in the church dedicated to her, he determined to publish the decree on his virtues, upon the very day when the Church celebrates her festival, namely, the 13th of December, 1756, the seventeenth year of his pontificate. In the meantime, his Holiness fell ill, was soon reduced to extremity, and his life was despaired of. The holy sacraments, and even Extreme Unction, had been administered to him; in those terrible moments no one thought of reminding him of the decree; but at last, God willed that some one should mention it, when the Pontiff, exhausted as he was, and almost at the last gasp, signed the deed with his own hand, and ordered the publication of the decree, not without the co-operation, as we may piously believe, of the glorious S. Lucia.

But to resume the thread of our history, from which we have rather digressed:—such was the ardour with which the building was undertaken, and so munificent was the piety of the faithful, that, within the space of a year, the edifice was reared with incredible rapidity, and the brethren took solemn possession of it by making

a general communion in it, with grateful thanks to the Almighty. But who could believe that on a day of such special joy to them, Ippolito and his associates should be made to taste the cup of bitterness? The devil, seeing the vessel brought to port, which he had so often furiously assailed, and, as it were, all but wrecked, could but ill suppress his rage. After singing vespers, the brethren quitted the oratory to go and recreate their minds a little, outside the city walls: they proceeded altogether to a place opposite the citadel, at a little distance from the meadow-gate: here they began to amuse themselves; but one of the sentinels seeing so many persons assembled together, suspected that some sudden surprise or attack upon the fortress was in contemplation; so he at once informed the garrison as well as the governor of the castle; who gave orders for the discharge of two field-pieces, intending by this to terrify and disperse the crowd: the good brothers, who were planning anything but mischief, could not at first comprehend the meaning of the discharge of cannon; but as soon as they became sensible of it, they prepared for a hasty retreat in dismay. However, as their promptitude did not satisfy the wishes of the governor, he desired the soldiers to fire upon the party. Providence permitted one of the balls to strike a large piece of stone, a fragment of which wounded the hand of one of the young men; all the others were terribly concerned at this accident, seeing that many of them might have fallen victims to a measure, as imprudent as it was

precipitate. In the midst of the alarm, Ippolito showed the most intrepidity, encouraging the rest, and assuring them that the whole affair was but a stratagem of the devil, who wanted to destroy the pious work, or at least, disperse its members. The case was represented to the Grand-duke in such colours as plainly showed how much the devil had to do with it. The affair was painted in the blackest colours, and such showy persuasions were employed as to convince the sovereign that reasons of state made it imperative to forbid pious meetings, which were represented as being generally dangerous. To avert the threatened storm, Ippolito poured forth ardent prayers to God, employing at the same time such means as Christian prudence suggested : he gave an exact account of all that had happened to the Cardinal-archbishop, then at Rome. His Eminence, who was well aware of the virtues of Ippolito, and of the perverse malice of those who had so often put his heroic virtue to the test, wrote immediately to the Grand-duke, warmly recommending the servant of God and his congregation to the protection of his highness ; saying that they would better maintain the peace and good order of his states, than a whole army could do. The Grand-duke being duly informed of the affair, and being made acquainted with the virtue of Ippolito, conceived a high esteem of him ; and what was still more, he secured the protection of his sovereign. Thus were the malicious artifices of the infernal enemy completely defeated.

## CHAPTER II.

NEW PERSECUTIONS AGAINST THE SAINT. HE RENOUNCES THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CONFRATERNITY. IS COMPELLED BY THE ARCHBISHOP TO RETAIN IT. EDIFIES HIS BRETHREN BY THE EXERCISE OF PATIENCE, AND IS CONSOLED BY GOD.

WE read of but few individuals who were so perseveringly, so systematically persecuted and afflicted as our Ippolito. No sooner did he gain one victory over the common enemy of mankind, than the devil employed new stratagems to hinder the progress of the Institute, or raised new trials and tribulation, which however only served to refine his virtue. Some of the brothers, who together with himself had been appointed to superintend the edifice, moved by the spirit of pride and ambition, aimed at being the moderators and masters of the congregation: to effect this, they exchanged the language of truth and justice, for that of envy, jealousy, and malice: they represented Ippolito as a ruffian, a hypocrite, and as one wholly unqualified to direct the institute. Thus giving vent to their self-love, which, generally speaking, is the rule both of the inclination and judgment of mankind, they everywhere spoke of him in this manner, throughout the city, as well as amongst themselves. But the favourable opinion of Ippolito was too firmly established, to be essentially affected by these slanders, especially in the eyes of his

superiors. He himself was the only one to believe what these ambitious evil-minded men reported of him; and although he had never undertaken anything but by the advice of his directors, (and frequently only in virtue of obedience,) he would most willingly have resigned the government of the pious work to some worthy person, if the Cardinal-archbishop had not insisted on his remaining firm, and had not forbidden him to resign the government of the institute into the hands of any one whomsoever. But when his Eminence was raised to the supreme Pontificate, taking the name of Leo XI. the archdiocese of Florence was committed to the charge of Alessandro Marzimedici, and the enemies of Ippolito thought this a good opportunity to wrest the government out of his hands, and gratify their own perverse wishes. They drew up a memorial full of infamous accusations against Ippolito, hoping to excite his prejudice against the servant of God; but before they fully disclosed their real project, they ought to have seen the necessity of destroying the favourable opinion which the new pastor would naturally form of him, arising from the fame and long experience of his virtue; these reflections, however, seem not to have entered the minds of his accusers, or if they did, they only stimulated them to make their calumnies more numerous, more weighty, and more artfully concocted. Such an excess of impudence and malice completely astounded the archbishop, who at once rejected the accusations, and severely reproved the authors of them. The servant of



God, seeing that they were blinded by passion, and would, therefore, not abandon their perverse designs, was anxious to remove all occasion of sin from their souls; he, therefore, had recourse to his superiors, offering to renounce his charge. They received him with great benignity, and with every demonstration of esteem; but so far from accepting the renunciation, they confirmed him in the office, encouraging him to govern the pious work, and promising him support. His adversaries finding that they gained nothing by publishing their calumnies, and that they could not conceal their malice under the mask of zeal, finally made up their minds to quit the congregation; leaving him burdened with a debt exceeding five hundred crowns, that had been contracted in the erection of the edifice: not satisfied with this, they publicly accused him of pride and ambition; adding, moreover, that as he would be unable to satisfy the creditors, he would be compelled to abandon the congregation with disgrace. Ippolito listened to this harangue, which lasted three hours, with downcast eyes, without a gesture, and without offering a word in vindication of himself: the spectators looked at one another, in respectful edification at such humble modesty, and such virtuous silence. When the reproaches ceased, the servant of God humbly thanked the speaker, and afterwards prayed daily for him, in imitation of Jesus Christ. These trials, raised by the turbulent and the ambitious, were not left unmingled with some sweet consolations. Almighty God took care of all, and no sooner was the whole

debt of the congregation cast upon him, than many spontaneous alms were bestowed, and in the short space of a month the debt was cancelled.

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### CHAPTER III.

HE COMPOSES RULES FOR THE DIRECTION OF THE INSTITUTE. ABUNDANT FRUIT DERIVED FROM THEM.

UNQUESTIONABLY the first care of a pious founder ought to be the consolidation of such rules, as, being extracted from the precepts and counsels of the Gospel, are calculated to lead souls to the highest degree of perfection. Such was the conduct of that father of a family, of whom we read in holy Scripture. Like an expert husbandman, he planted his mystical vineyard, and then immediately took care to surround it with a hedge; and this, according to the holy Fathers, is meant to indicate the rules, which in every religious order and congregation are the most secure prop and support of the establishment. The severe storm, which for so long a time and in so many ways had assailed the servant of God, being at length appeased, and the building of his oratory being satisfactorily completed, he began to introduce those wise regulations, so expedient and so well adapted to the wants of the soul. It is true to say, that from the time he began to establish his congregation, he had drawn up a rough draught of the rules; but when the number of the

brothren increased, and they were provided with the long-wished-for place of their own, he revised these rules, and reduced them to their actual state of perfection. Having been examined and declared most useful, the Archbishop Marzimedici approved them; they have recently been subjected to a close examination by the Sacred Congregation of regular bishops at Rome, when his Holiness Pope Leo XII. confirmed their judgment, by a decree dated the 17th of September, 1824. It would occupy too much time and space, were we to enter into a minute description of these very useful constitutions; but in order to give some idea of the spirit which animated the servant of God in introducing the practice of them, we will give a rapid sketch of some of the more remarkable points.

In the first place, the chief object of the institute being to instruct children and adults in the Christian doctrine on all festivals, it was to be denominated "The Congregation of Christian Doctrine." The servant of God was convinced, that if several persons were jointly to govern an institute of this sort, it would be difficult to prevent difference of opinion, confusion, and quarrels; therefore, he thought it advisable, for the better success of the affairs pertaining to it, to establish it as a rule, that one worthy individual should be elected perpetual guardian, in whose hands should be placed the list of the things belonging to the pious brotherhood. He, moreover, decided that there should be four assistants, to help and advise the

guardian in the more important affairs of the congregation, especially in the choice of the officials, amounting in number to about ninety-eight. Ippolito divided the constitutions into two distinct classes; in the first, which related to children, he prescribed the method to be observed in instructing them both in faith and morals. In the second, which concerns the brethren themselves, he pointed out the admirable manner in which they may progress, from the earliest youth, even to decrepitude, in the practice of virtue and Christian perfection.

With a view of benefiting the younger children, Ippolito divided the excellent treatise on Christian doctrine, written by Cardinal Bellarmine, into fifteen parts, assigning to each one of them, according to necessity, one or more preceptors, who were to teach them to their pupils, promoting those in each class who showed the most diligence and ability. As it often happens that many, either from want of education or negligence, are ignorant of the first elements of religion, and of things necessary to salvation, yet are unwilling to mingle with a group of children, in order to acquire this necessary information, Ippolito resolved to remedy this serious inconvenience, and prudently gave orders that both before and after giving private instructions, one of the more advanced children should recite the Lord's prayer, the angelical salutation, the apostle's creed, and the precepts of the decalogue aloud; and that afterwards, two youths should recite some part of the Christian doctrine, in

the way of dialogue. He, moreover, ordained, that whilst the teachers were privately instructing their respective classes, the prefect or head master should be seated in a pulpit apart, where he might more minutely explain to those under instruction, such abstruse points and doubts as should arise, adroitly introducing such remarks as would induce them to live like good Christians. He formed a separate class for those children who were preparing to make their first confession, particularly insisting on their being well taught the manner of examining their conscience, on obedience to their parents, on devotion to their guardian angel, and to our Blessed Lady, of whose patronage he strove to make them worthy, by advising them to join the Congregation of the Rosary. He followed the same plan with regard to those who were disposing themselves to approach the holy eucharistic banquet for the first time. Having thus established his rule for what concerned the instruction of children, seeing that fresh persons every day repaired to the oratory, Ippolito conceived the idea of forming another class, to be called the stragglers; for this purpose, he chose such amongst the brethren as were most remarkable for prudence and judgment, whose duty it should be to welcome these strangers with cordiality, and persuade them to frequent the oratory, and, moreover, exhort them to purify their consciences by means of a general confession, taking care to secure the services of a good director.

Before our Divine Master began to teach His

heavenly doctrine, He would first practise it Himself, as we read in the holy Gospel, "Jesus began to do and to teach;" so likewise did Ippolito require of his brethren, that, though not retired within the cloister, they should apply with great fervour of spirit to the practice of Christian virtue and evangelical perfection, they themselves first practising what they taught; to this effect, he compiled some very wise regulations, and formed several classes, wherein the brothers were to give proofs of their endeavours to acquire those virtues which they had undertaken to practise. Those belonging to the general school, who seemed worthy of promotion, he encouraged to pass onwards to exercises of higher perfection; for instance, those in one of the lower classes, who were to attend chiefly to the virtues of modesty and mortification, were encouraged to proceed further, and practise those which are higher and more noble, such as charity, patience, and so forth, until they became perfect in all.

The fruit of these wise and prudent constitutions, can be well attested by those favoured souls who had the good fortune to frequent the oratory whilst Ippolito was its master. Many of the brothers who strictly followed his rules, reached so high a degree of perfection, as to be held in a universal opinion of sanctity, both in life and after death. Again, let us consider the advantage of instructions in faith and morals, conferred on innumerable children, artizans, country-people, and idlers; and it will suffice to

say, that their Christian conduct fully proved of what father they were the children; or, rather, their conduct showed the source from whence they drew their spirit of sincere piety. Hence the congregation was looked upon as a holy institute, not only at Florence, but even in distant parts. It is thus styled by those who spoke of it in the processes, as well as by those respectable ecclesiastics who had there discharged the functions of confessor; who could never sufficiently eulogise it, and concluded by beseeching the Almighty, that the same spirit of piety might everywhere be found, as flourished in the congregation instituted and directed by Ippolito.

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## CHAPTER IV.

HE INTRODUCES PIOUS EXERCISES SUITABLE TO THE  
SUMMER MONTHS. INSTITUTES WATCHINGS DURING  
THE CARNIVAL, &c.

IPPOLITO enjoyed the sweet consolation of seeing the greater part of the brethren assume new manners, a change of heart, and live in the strict observance of their Christian duties. Anxious, however, that his vineyard should produce a still more abundant harvest of spiritual advantages; after drawing up his admirable rules, he studied the best means of introducing other practices of piety in the oratory, or of improving those already in use. Without stopping minutely

to describe their number, order, or variety, the Christian reader will be satisfied if we merely give them a hasty glance. During the long days of summer, he wished to prevent the brothers from roving about the streets, and also induce them to spend profitably that portion of time left free from toil and domestic duties: to succeed in this, he decided that from Easter-day until the 4th of October, the brethren should meet in congregation every evening, with the exception of Fridays and Sundays, and then retire to their respective homes at a seasonable hour: the time they thus spent together was chiefly employed in reading the Lives of the Saints, meditating on the four last things, praying for the necessities of the Church, and singing pious canticles. To implore the aid of heavenly grace in favour of his pious associates, Ippolito proposed to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the oratory with the greatest respect and due adornment of the place, during the three days of Pentecost. From the beginning of October, when the evening meetings of the congregation were to cease, the servant of God would go with all the brethren together to enjoy a little recreation at Fiesoli. On the day appointed for their departure, they all assembled in the oratory at an early hour to sing the office of our blessed Lady; then dividing themselves in several classes, they set out accompanied by their respective masters, reciting the rosary and others prayers on the way: the modesty, recollection, devotion, and silence of these pious groups, rendered them



a subject of edification to those who saw them. On reaching Fiesoli, where they had an oratory of their own, Ippolito, considering the great number of his followers, in the first place, conducted them to the monastery of the Riformati, where they all approached the holy tribunal of penance and received the most holy Eucharist: after devoting due time to acts of thanksgiving after communion, they all repaired to the garden belonging to the said religious, where a frugal collation was ready prepared for them: after this repast, a pious play was represented, the brethren performing the various characters: in this, as in everything else, he looked to their spiritual profit, as well as to the advantage of strangers; these were admitted, on condition that they had in the morning of that same day purified their consciences by confession, and afterwards had received holy communion. But it was during the carnival, a time when most people abandon themselves to dissipation and frivolity, that the good servant of God endeavoured by every means in his power to keep his beloved brethren at a distance from danger. For this purpose, besides their ordinary practices of piety, he appointed spiritual vigils, when they were to listen to the reading of the Lives of Saints, to sing the complin of our Lady's office, and to perform certain concerts, consisting of instrumental and vocal music, and all of a devotional character: this proved to be a great attraction, and preserved many from occasions of sin. Old and young hastened to the oratory in crowds; and although great

numbers may have gone merely for the pleasure of hearing the music, surely the meetings ought not to be blamed on this account. At theatres, balls, gambling-houses, and parties, the indiscriminate mixture of age and sex gratifies in a high degree our eager and worldly delights; whereas, Ippolito, by the efficacy of his discourses, conquered many souls during those days of general delirium—for so may the carnival days truly be called. But the active zeal of Ippolito was not satisfied with this; after the general communion of the brethren, he provided a meal for the poor, on one of the last days of the carnival; during his life time, the banquet was but frugal, his resources being slight; but as time progressed, means increased, so much so, that it became even sumptuous, both for abundance and excellence of the meat: this pious custom still continues to exist, thanks to the zeal and patronage of their Serene Highnesses, who, together with many distinguished ecclesiastics and secular persons, honour this annual and edifying banquet of the poor with their presence: even at the present day, it is most gratifying to see these illustrious visitors making themselves so useful; some preparing, some carving, some carrying, some distributing the food with pleasing affability; whilst others, mingling with the group, converse on pious or useful subjects: at the end of the meal, each poor person receives an alms. The greater part of the merit of this good work must be ascribed to Ippolito, who was the first to plan and introduce the pious custom.

## CHAPTER V.

NEW ENDEAVOURS TO INCREASE THE FERVOUR OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION. HE RECEIVES MANY REQUESTS FROM VARIOUS PLACES TO FOUND OR REFORM CONFRATERNITIES. HIS ZEAL IN COMPLYING WITH THESE DEMANDS.

ALTHOUGH Ippolito had thus wisely regulated all that his indefatigable zeal suggested for the spiritual welfare of his brethren, he was far from making any change in his own mode of life ; nor did he diminish his toil : on the contrary, his pre-eminence only served as a stimulus, compelling him to precede others by the force of good example. He was most exact in the observance of his constitutions, and was no less zealous in seeing that they were observed by others. Following the advice of holy and learned persons, he introduced the practice of public mortifications for such of the members as swerved from the rules. It is well known that pride is a formidable vice, over which we seldom obtain a complete victory : hence there were some who could not endure these public but moderate corrections for their faults of inobservance ; so following the evil counsels of turbulent friends, they resolved to abandon the congregation. Their desertion occasioned deep regret to the servant of God ; but being in a short time clearly convinced of the utility of the remedy prescribed by him, these erring brothers, grieving and repentant, returned

to the congregation, and humbly begged pardon for their unjustifiable proceeding.

In the meantime, the sweet odour of his virtues, and the fame of the useful work instituted by him, began to be universally known and acknowledged, and caused many persons to wish for similar foundations. The bishop of Volterra, Monsignor Alamanni, was the first who urgently pressed Ippolito to go over and establish his pious congregation in that city: the good servant of God immediately yielded to the entreaty, too happy to feed the bright flame of his charity with such suitable fuel, and at once undertook the journey: as soon as he arrived, his words and his example so enkindled the fervour of the inhabitants, that he was able to erect the congregation in the course of a few days, precisely in the manner the zealous pastor had wished. The servant of God undertook to prescribe the method to be followed by the rising establishment, and having with the assistance of Heaven completed the pious foundation, he had the consolation of seeing the inhabitants flock in crowds to be aggregated to the new institute.

Equally pressing were the entreaties of the confraternity of S. Giovanni at Pistoja, who were most anxious to re-adjust the statutes of their congregation upon the plan of his. Burning with zeal for the honour of God and the salvation of souls, he went thither, and left them such wise regulations as led to the perfect reform and stability of that congregation: whatever his foresight and experience suggested was put in execution, and

the effects corresponded with his best hopes. In fact, it was but seldom that his diligence and toil were not crowned with success.

We must not silently pass over all that our indefatigable Ippolito effected for the benefit of souls in the town of Lucca. A pious young man had erected a congregation there, in order to devote himself to works of Christian piety ; that he might be the better able to carry it on to a notable degree of perfection, he solicited the aid of Ippolito, who, impelled by the desire of benefiting souls, promptly responded to the call, and introduced admirable arrangements in a very short time : the number of the brotherhood increased surprisingly, and they remained constant in the service of God, as they themselves gratefully affirmed on several occasions.

But a far more ample field was opened to his zeal in the city of Modena, whither he was sent by the Grand-duke Cosmo II. expressly to found a new congregation there. Count Paolo Boschetti having noticed, when at Florence, the good results produced by the institute of Ippolito, conceived an ardent desire to see one on the same plan opened in his own country. He signified his wishes to Ippolito, from whom he received suitable directions for the purpose : he returned to Modena, and immediately began to collect such of the more pious inhabitants as he could, in order to give a beginning to his laudable project. These good people, delighted at the account given them of what the servant of God was accomplishing at Florence, undertook privately to imitate his

example : as the beneficent rays of the sun quickly diffuse themselves through space ; so too did the virtue of these pious citizens rapidly become manifest, and excite both admiration and imitation. So great was the desire of seeing the undertaking perfected, that the assistance of Ippolito was urgently requested. The servant of God yielded to the wish, and proceeded accordingly to Modena, with orders, however, from the Grand-duke of Tuscany, to return to Florence at the end of a week. The Duke of Modena being anxious that his subjects might enjoy the benefit of the presence of Ippolito for a longer space of time, interposed his mediation, and obtained permission for the servant of God to postpone his return home for the space of forty days : we may not stop to detail minutely all the advantages he procured for the Modenese during that time. For the few first days his zeal was employed in drawing up regulations for the new institute, providing, by all possible means, for the due celebration of divine worship ; and in recommending above all things, unity, fervour, and charity, to the brethren, whose numbers rapidly increased, and whose fervour of spirit kept pace with their increasing numbers. He preached three times every day, and spent all the rest of his time instructing the inhabitants, and infusing into their hearts those lights and directions that were best suited to their actual necessities. Then the city of Modena witnessed with astonishment multitudes of stray souls return to the right path, and remain true to their good purposes. Rough and polished,

literary and ignorant, all eagerly pressed to hear him: the duke himself, with the bishop and the most distinguished ecclesiastics, often went to his sermons, and were filled with admiration at his zeal: to satisfy the almost universal wish of the people, the priests were obliged to pass the whole day in the confessionals, so that every one was fully convinced of the advantages arising from his labours. Ippolito quitted Modena, but the remembrance of him and his benefits remained indelibly engraven in the hearts of the Modenese, who, desirous of transmitting it to posterity, after the death of the servant of God, placed a sort of votive offering close to his sepulchre, bearing the following epigraph, "*Traxisti ad pugnam, erigas ad coronam:*" "Thou hast drawn me to the battle, mayest thou raise me to the crown!"

These were not the only places in which these pious customs were introduced; on the contrary, in several others either Ippolito or his brethren were the means of leading to a reformation of manners, the love of virtue, the observance of Christian duties, pious and religious practices, and many other beneficial arrangements, as suggested by his ardent charity. Signa, Camugliano, Ponsacco, and other villages in Tuscany; Cento in the territory of Ferrara, and the city of Perugia, can all bear testimony to this. The city of Parma would likewise have experienced the beneficial effects of the zeal of Ippolito, if on his arrival there he had not been compelled to a hasty departure, owing to the afflicting and unexpected intelligence he received from Florence,

warning him that his congregation was in great danger, arising from the fresh persecutions of its adversaries.

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## CHAPTER VI.

HE RUNS GREAT RISK FROM THE DESIGNS OF TWO WICKED MEN. MARVELLOUS WAY IN WHICH GOD PRESERVES HIM. NEW MARKS OF GOD'S LOVE TOWARDS HIM.

NOT without reason did we say elsewhere, that Ippolito was odious to hell, for at no time did the common enemy desist from the endeavour to oppress and injure him. Scarcely had the servant of God laid the foundation of his institute, than such a tempest was raised against him, as would have terrified any heart less magnanimous than his own. Rebuffs, indignation, and threats, opened the infernal persecution; these were followed by insults, ill-treatment, and affronts, not private only, but even public; not for a short time, but they were persisted in for years and years with unexampled obstinacy. The zeal, however, of the pious founder was neither checked nor slackened by all this; he prayed, he persevered, he endured all, until at length he had the satisfaction of seeing his labours blessed by Heaven, and his best wishes realized. The congregation being provided with a suitable locality, and the constitutions for the promoting the spiritual welfare of the brethren, having been framed and adopted,



Ippolito employed himself in combating vice, and in leading hearts to the love of Christian piety, when two evil-minded youths, instigated by rancour or envy, resolved to take away his life ; and, to carry their diabolical purpose into effect, they availed themselves of his well-known spirit of charity. They called at his house one winter's evening, pretending that a sick man requested his compassionate assistance. Our benevolent Ippolito did not hesitate a moment, and dismissing an acquaintance named Bisnagni, who happened to be conversing with him at the time, he left his house, followed by the two young men ; on reaching the bridge near the Trinità, they looked earnestly at him, and said, "Foolish man, thy fatal hour is come !" and furiously seizing him, they hurled him into the Arno. Almighty God, however, was nigh, and took special care of His servant, not permitting the rage of hell to prevail against him ; by an intervention surely miraculous, he was saved from the imminent danger of drowning. As was afterwards learned from Ippolito himself, our Blessed Lady, Queen of angels, and the patriarch S. Francesco, whom he invoked at the moment he was plunged into the water, suddenly appeared to him, supported him, and encouraging him not to fear, drew him safely to the river's bank. Being thus rescued from danger, he returned lively thanks to God, and then returned home with a cheerful heart, fully intending to conceal the whole adventure ; but such was not to be the case ; there had been one attentive spectator of

the wonderful preservation of Ippolito ; the above-named Bisnagni had followed at a distance, (impelled either by some suspicion of the young men, or some other cause,) and was near the spot when Ippolito was thrown into the river ; he rushed forward in terrible alarm, in hopes of being able to render assistance, but with great apprehension and full expectation of his friend's death ; to his utter astonishment, he saw Ippolito step safe and sound out of the water, and proceed at once in the direction of his own house. Being satisfied of the safety of the innocent one, he resolved to pursue the guilty authors of so atrocious an attempt ; he followed them so rapidly as soon to overtake them, and heard them actually exulting in the success of their scheme. He next hurried back to the house of Ippolito, to learn from his own lips by what wonderful means he had been rescued from such awful danger. The servant of God was distressed to find that his accident should be known to any one, it being his earnest wish to conceal both the crime of the wretched youths, as well as the favour conferred by God on himself ; consequently he enjoined rigorous silence on his friend, in order to screen the guilty from the chastisement they so well deserved. In effect, we should certainly never have known either the misdeed, or the miracle, if Bisnagni had not disclosed it after the death of Ippolito ; and his account was confirmed by persons of authority, to whom the servant of God had deemed it his duty to reveal it.

This was not the only instance in which Ippolito was wonderfully preserved from danger by the right-hand of the Most High; on several other occasions he experienced the special predilection of Heaven. In one calamitous year the poor of Florence were reduced to such misery as to be compelled to lie on the bare ground. To furnish them with some better accommodation to rest upon, Ippolito begged a few loads of straw as an alms from a certain lady, and entered a stable situated immediately beneath his own room, to take the straw for the purpose indicated: by some means or other a fire broke out in the stable at night, and burnt part of the beam which supported his room, threatening, of course, the destruction of the house: being awakened by the smoke which almost suffocated him, he thought of invoking the aid of God by fervent prayer, whilst his relatives and neighbours, in terror and dismay, were exerting themselves to arrest the progress of the flames. Ippolito turned to the crucifix which he always kept in his poor chamber, and had the indescribable happiness of being assured by the mouth of our Lord Himself, that the conflagration would not injure him in the least. At that very moment the flames subsided: the sudden extinction of the fire excited the astonishment of every one, who knew not how to account for so evident a prodigy, otherwise than by ascribing the favour to the fervent prayers of Ippolito.

## CHAPTER VII.

NEW PERSECUTIONS RAISED AGAINST THE SERVANT OF GOD, THROUGH THE ENVY OF SOME OF HIS COMPANIONS. THEY ACCUSE HIM BEFORE THE HOLY OFFICE. HIS INNOCENCE IS DISCOVERED, AND THE INQUISITORS CONCEIVE GREAT ESTEEM FOR HIM.

ALTHOUGH Heaven thus manifested its predilection for Ippolito on these and other similar occasions, we may say that the trials and difficulties to which Almighty God was pleased to subject his virtue, were no less remarkable. We have detailed in some of the preceding chapters, the severe persecutions he experienced even from his own spiritual children, towards whom he ever nourished in his heart, and testified by his actions, the most sincere affection. It cannot therefore be denied, that the grief of Ippolito was aggravated by the very fact of its being occasioned by those from whom he ought to have experienced comfort and consolation: no trial however so severely afflicted him, as the persecution we are about to relate. The holy man had long foreseen it, but when he saw that it was close at hand, he undertook a pious pilgrimage, in order to strengthen himself against the coming ordeal; and assuredly he needed a special, and superhuman assistance, to sustain him under it.

Pride, that baneful root of all the evils which

inundate this earth, began to germinate in the hearts of some of his less cautious brethren ; like unto a spark which falls on a dry twig, and then extending through a shrubbery, devastates land and cottages, so too does pride push on its ravages. Governed by its spirit, they represented Ippolito as unfit to rule the Institute, and that they, possessing the requisite abilities, were better qualified to discharge the office of guardian ; they next began to blame the works, and under the mask of zeal they even found fault with the rules : they suggested new plans, the direct object of which was to weaken the high opinion in which others held him ; and in hopes of conciliating the favour and approbation of the generality of the members, they adopted no less a means than that of relaxation of discipline. They everywhere asserted that the severity of Ippolito was no longer bearable ; and thus succeeded in gaining many over to their party, more especially the younger ones, whom they persuaded not to be guided by his counsels. The servant of God noticed this alienation, and began to apprehend the utter extermination of the institute ; to prevent so dreadful a disaster, he employed all those means which prudence, zeal, and charity suggested. Assiduous prayer, sanguinary flagellations, meek and humble exhortations, to the brothers, both in public and private, were the means he deemed best calculated to avert the storm ; but all in vain, instead of subsiding, disorders daily increased, and the spirit of discord gained ground in the minds of his spiritual sons : the sight of this humbled but

did not confound or dismay Ippolito ; to prevent the total devastation of his beloved vineyard, he thought it expedient permanently to establish four priests of known talent and piety in the oratory, for the administration of the sacraments ; these priests, by attaching themselves to the place, and becoming familiarized with its statutes, would be able to maintain a spirit of concord amongst the brethren, and oppose a barrier to such disturbances as might occasionally arise. Commendable as this project was, its execution was extremely difficult. Funds for these chaplaincies were wanting ; yet these were absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the priests. However, as Ippolito was convinced that the plan would be pleasing to God, he courageously undertook it with the full confidence of a favourable issue ; neither were his hopes deceived, he soon met with some generous souls, willing to employ a portion of their worldly substance on so pious an object, who furnished him with a sum sufficient to endow one chaplaincy with an annual revenue of fifty Roman crowns.

But God, who alternates the consolations and trials of His best-loved children, would, precisely at this time, permit the malice of these proud brethren to vent itself upon Ippolito in calumny, and in calumny the darkest and the most infamous. The servant of God was accused at the tribunal of the inquisition, of teaching in his sermons errors contrary to the dogmas and articles of our holy faith. The prudent inquisitor, that he might not injure innocence through any fault

of his, before coming to any decision or passing judgment, secretly sent two trust-worthy religious of his own order, to hear the sermons of the holy man. They proceeded accordingly to the oratory, where the discourse of Ippolito quite astonished them, so admirable was his method of announcing the Christian doctrine, and they spoke in most honourable and advantageous terms of it to the inquisitor: not satisfied with this, however, he sent other persons equally prudent and learned, desiring them minutely to watch the expressions of the servant of God: like the former, they too were in astonishment and admiration at the manner in which he sowed the seed of the divine word, and expatiated upon it in terms of warm eulogy on their return to the inquisitor, pressing him to go himself, and so be able to judge of the fervour and sanctity of his maxims. To be the more fully convinced of what the before-named persons had advanced with regard to Ippolito, he resolved to judge from his own experience; so sending for Ippolito, he questioned him upon his state and mode of life, and inquired, moreover, from what source he drew the subject and arguments of his public discourses. Ippolito answered every question with great humility, and concluded by declaring that the crucifix was the book in which he most frequently studied. The inquisitor was highly edified at his answers, and exhorted him to pursue the career he had entered upon with constant fervour, and solemnly promised to protect and defend him on all suitable occasions. He next

summoned the authors of the calumnies, and severely reprehended them, threatening them with due chastisement if they renewed their infamous designs. The inquisitor died soon after this occurrence; the adversaries of Ippolito availed themselves of the circumstance, and repeated their accusations to his successor: resolving to clear up the matter, this latter repaired in person one evening to the oratory, where he arrived unexpectedly, precisely at the moment when Ippolito was preaching on the excellence of the adorable sacrament of the altar: he treated it in so admirable and sublime a manner, that as soon as the discourse was ended, the inquisitor ran and embraced him, thus publicly testifying his approbation and esteem. He himself undertook to deliver a discourse to the brethren on the following Sunday; in it he passed a high eulogium on Ippolito and his maxims. He, moreover, conceived such an affection for the servant of God and his congregation, that he often visited their oratory, celebrating mass and administering the Holy Sacraments there.



## CHAPTER VIII.

OBSTINACY OF HIS PERSECUTORS. THEY ACCUSE HIM BEFORE BOTH ECCLESIASTICAL AND SECULAR SUPERIORS. HIS INNOCENCE TRIUMPHS. HIS GENEROSITY TO HIS PERSECUTORS. HE FOUNDS FOUR CHAPLAINCIES ATTACHED TO THE ORATORY.

WE read of old, that the more the Pharisees saw Jesus of Nazareth followed and applauded by the people, the more did their envy and hatred of him increase ; so, in like manner, when the adversaries of Ippolito saw him laden with encomiums, and in the enjoyment of an almost universal esteem, they were resolved, cost what it might, to have him humbled and depressed, redoubling their efforts to insure success. They declared on oath that the good Ippolito was guilty of a thousand atrocities ; and seizing a moment which seemed to them to be opportune, they presented a memorial to Monsignor Marzimedici, Archbishop of Florence, wherein feigning to be men burning with zeal for the interests of religion, they besought him to put a stop to such serious disorders. Although malice often becomes powerful and formidable when invested with the shield of virtue, there was but little mischief done on the present occasion ; that prudent pastor knew too well that Ippolito and his labours had, for years and years, been benefiting the public, and that he had perpetuated his love for the children of the poor and illiterate, by instilling maxims of

religion into their hearts, so that not only the capital of Tuscany had resounded with the fame of his sanctity, but that a hundred other places could bear witness to his zeal, his charity, and the efficacy of his words ; and, finally, that a man who was the head and founder of so useful an institute—a man respected as a pattern of Christian virtues, ought not to be made a target for the arrows of his enemies. He at once repulsed these perverse men, in such a manner as to evince his indignation ; whilst, to give a perpetual attestation of his esteem for the servant of God, he erected at his own expense a handsome chapel for the congregation.

This scheme of his enemies being defeated, they next addressed themselves to Monsignor Antonio Grimani, then at Florence as Nuncio from his Holiness ; but here again their infamous measures failed, for the Nuncio made inquiries of the most trustworthy persons of the city, from whom he received a true and genuine account, highly honourable and advantageous to the good servant of God ; whereupon he sharply reproved the malignant, and loading Ippolito with commendations, he exhorted him to persevere in his holy career. All this only served to render his adversaries still more bitter. Having gained the confidence of some persons in power, they thought themselves now in a fair way of accomplishing their project : thus supported, they endeavoured by means of subterfuge and cabal, to persuade the Grand-duke Cosmo II. that Ippolito was a wicked man. Although his Highness had a high opinion

of Ippolito, he would nevertheless give fair satisfaction to his accusers; he desired one of his auditors, a man of probity and penetration, to obtain accurate information on the subject, omitting for this purpose no means suggested by rectitude and prudence: the person so deputed soon saw through the whole imposture, and was exceedingly edified by the prudence, meekness, humility, and other virtues which so abundantly enriched the good servant of God. In a word, he was convinced that Ippolito was a Saint, that the congregation founded by him tended to the glory of God, and the good of the public; that the members were animated by the same spirit as their chief, with the exception of the faction, which at once became an object of abomination and scandal in his sight. In making his report to the Grand-duke, he expressed these his sentiments with religious sincerity, protesting that what he had witnessed, had filled him with most lively consolation. This conversation convinced his Highness that the deputy had not allowed himself to be ensnared by those who conspired to oppress the brilliant innocence of Ippolito; but that he had weighed innocence and iniquity in the scales of justice. Whereupon, the prince gave orders for the severe chastisement of the calumniators, to serve as an example to others. As soon as Ippolito was informed of this, he interceded for them with the Grand-duke, and although unable to obtain a full remission of their sentence, it was at least materially mitigated. Such was the admirable manner in which the

servant of God sought vengeance on his persecutors: yet strange to say, these men availed themselves of his beneficence only to ill-treat him the more. Though repulsed by their ecclesiastical superiors, and partially punished by the Grand-duke himself, they still remained obstinately bent on prosecuting their infernal scheme of vilifying and discrediting the servant of God, and resolved to carry their false accusations to his Holiness at Rome. Their insolence soon reached the knowledge of the Grand-duke, who immediately wrote to the Pope upon the subject, giving him a true account of the edifying example and the consummate virtue which had ever shone forth in the good servant of God; and thus the renewed machinations of the wicked were again defeated.

By these means the innocence of Ippolito was established; but, though fully resigned to the Divine dispensations, he could not (considering the extreme sensibility of his heart) be otherwise than deeply wounded at this unjust persecution, raised, as it was, by the ingratitude and audacity of his own brethren, whom he had so much loved and benefited. He was, nevertheless, most generous in granting pardon, and in pouring forth lively prayers to God for the safe return of these straying sheep. In proportion as the malice of men strove to crush, so would the right-hand of the Most High exalt him. Our Lord, who had so often proved his admirable fortitude under tribulation, inspired the Grand-duke solemnly to declare himself the protector of Ippolito and his

congregation ; this put an end to the trials and vexations raised by his turbulent brethren, who at last became conscious of the injustice of the proceedings, and returned penitent, to him at whom all their blows had so long been aimed, and whose patience they had so cruelly exercised ; Ippolito welcomed them with his usual meekness and charity : he had always loved them, and looking on them, not as the authors of his afflictions, but only as his friends and brothers, he made himself a mediator between them and God, to obtain the pardon of their misdeeds. All disturbances being now appeased, he applied himself with redoubled energy to the improvement of his congregation ; and in compensation for past sorrows, God was pleased to afford him a sweet consolation. The Grand-duke and some other princes of the illustrious house de' Medici, generously contributed a sum for the foundation of the four chaplaincies which he deemed indispensable, affording a suitable stipend for four pious priests, who not being charged with other incumbrances, but being permanently established in the oratory, could there administer the sacraments, and co-operate in the due regulation of the institute. Indescribable was the delight and happiness of Ippolito, caused by this most useful foundation. Seeing the devil thus confounded, who had so long been labouring to overthrow the pious work ; and considering the benefit which would result in perpetuity to his beloved congregation, and the glory which would re-

dound to the Divine Majesty, Ippolito was filled with holy joy, and repeatedly exclaimed, "God has conquered!—God has conquered!"

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## CHAPTER IX.

LAST DAYS OF IPPOLITO. HIS ILLNESS AND EXCEEDING FERVOUR WHEN RECEIVING THE MOST HOLY VIATICUM.

THE trials which had so unceasingly afflicted the heart of Ippolito, having come to an end, and the long-wished-for foundation of the four chaplaincies being accomplished, the servant of God began to sigh for the moment when his soul, released from the frame which imprisoned it, might pass to that blessed kingdom of peace, which our Saviour teaches us incessantly to ask of His Divine Father; nor was our Lord slow to grant the realization of his desires, for already the term of his labours was at hand. As the flame becomes more resplendent, more lively, and more clear, the nearer we approach it, so did the bright flame of Divine love in him, increase immeasurably as he neared his end; his unwearied zeal became more active, his discourses on the greatness of God more fervent, his prayers more assiduous, his fasts more rigorous, and his daily conversations with his brethren more ardent; these conversations generally referred to the welfare and progress of the insti-

tute. Being assured by a superior light that he was near the end of his career, for which, in fact, the whole tenor of his life had been disposing him, he now began to prepare more immediately for his last passage, being persuaded from the first moment of his illness, that it would prove mortal. The will which he made, and the salutary advice which he bequeathed to his confraternity, were a brilliant epilogue of all his virtues. We now proceed to give some account of his last illness.

Ippolito was in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and was at Fiesoli at the oratory there already mentioned, when on the 26th of October, he was informed that the Grand-duke had been inquiring for him, and wished to see him at the palace that same day. The servant of God set out instantly on his return to Florence, where on his arrival he was immediately introduced into the apartment of his sovereign, who, professing the highest esteem for him, detained him several hours, and did not dismiss him until nightfall. On quitting the ducal palace, Ippolito was seized with an oppression on the chest, and with so painful an asthma that he could scarcely drag himself along to his own house. On the following morning, his malady was considerably aggravated by the necessity he was under of returning to Fiesoli; although the distance was only about two miles, such was his state of debility and suffering, that he was nearly four hours on the road. On his arrival, fever came on, and he was no longer able to stand.

During the morning of the first of November, his friends decided on re-conveying him to Florence in a litter, in hopes of his being better taken care of there. The journey was excessively painful to the servant of God, but at the same time it was for him an occasion of practising patience, and of blessing the sweet will of God. His countenance was serene and cheerful, as if he really rejoiced in bodily sufferings and oppression, and he said, "Go, go, where thou wilt find fine pasture to digest! no longer wilt thou be able to act as thou pleasest: thou must bend to the orders of the doctor, however ill he may treat thee." By the time he reached Florence, the asthma was so much worse, that the effort of breathing was so painful as almost to deprive him of life. A consultation of the faculty was held, when it was unanimously decided that he should be bled; this was immediately done, and with the worst possible result: his illness progressed so alarmingly, that every one believed his last hour was at hand. His confessor informed him of his imminent danger, and asked him whether he did not wish to receive the Holy Viaticum, thus to fortify his soul under its last step into eternity. Never had Ippolito been seen so joyful as when he heard that his mortal bands would soon be loosened; and thanking God with all his heart, he answered that there was nothing he so ardently desired as to unite himself most amorously with his loving and only Good. He began his preparation with inconceivable fervour, and made his general con-



fession that very evening, with as much humility and contrition, as if his whole life had been one tissue of crimes. We can give but a slight idea of the burning aspirations which burst from his heart during the course of the night: one moment he dwelt on the happiness of having been born in the bosom of the Catholic Church, for which he rendered thanks, and thus renewed his faith; then, burying himself in the contemplation of the Divine promises, he joyfully looked forward to their complete fulfilment, and thus revived his hope; then, contemplating the vast ocean of Divine goodness, he could not comprehend how or why he had so little corresponded with it, and thus excited himself to a still more ardent love. The most perfect resignation, the most intense desire of suffering, an affectionate eagerness to be speedily united to God, formed one continued chain of pious exercises, and clearly manifested the inward sentiments of his heart. The holy Viaticum was brought him on the morning of the fourth of November, when his charity appeared more brilliant than ever. He requested his confessor as a favour before giving him communion, to make a protestation in his name, that he had ever lived, and was resolved to die, in the bosom of the holy Catholic Church, the mistress of truth, and the depositary of the divine mysteries. After this, he himself recited the "Confiteor," with a deep feeling of humiliation and sorrow; and the expressions in which he poured forth his heart before Jesus Christ, served as new fuel to the furnace of his ardent affections: he

much wished to kneel prostrate on the ground to receive the Sacred Host, but his confessor forbade this, fearing to increase the malady. Ippolito, therefore, submitted as best he could, and like the hart thirsting after the fountain of waters, so did he with transports receive the Bread of Angels.

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## CHAPTER X.

AFTER A SHORT RESPITE, HE IS ATTACKED WITH A NEW AND MORE VIOLENT ILLNESS. HIS INVINCIBLE PATIENCE AND WONDERFUL CHARITY.

IPPOLITO, on receiving the Immaculate Lamb, found not only his soul filled with the sweetest delights, but even his very body was essentially re-invigorated. For two whole months his malady seemed to be arrested, but at the expiration of this interval, water on the chest declared itself, and occasioned such severe suffering that he could not breathe freely either by night or day. He implicitly obeyed the directions of the doctors, and though tormented with an insatiable thirst, he never tried to mitigate it, nor would he without their permission swallow so much as a drop of water; he had no other aim than that of conforming himself perfectly, both in suffering and in obedience, to the example of Jesus Christ, whose bitter passion and death had long been indelibly engraven in his heart: speaking on this subject, he frequently said, that the sick ought to leave

themselves to the entire disposal of their doctors, never blaming or disapproving their directions; on the contrary, they ought to receive all with patience from the hand of God, and not give scandal by their disobedience. By some accident or other, some putrid water was one day given him in mistake for white wine, when supposing it to have been ordered by the doctor, he quietly swallowed it, although he felt that it would create nausea and prove injurious to him: being afterwards informed of the mistake, he was not the least vexed about it, but as if gently reproaching himself, he said it was quite fair his palate should be made to enjoy that unpleasant beverage. It was indeed admirable to witness his fortitude during those days of extreme suffering; he was never cast down, and seemed only to wish to suffer yet more for the love of God: during the agony of death, no disturbance of countenance, no complaining word escaped him.

As soon as the dangerous illness of the servant of God became known, there was a general excitement amongst his brethren, and other acquaintances of every rank. All would go to visit him and receive his blessing, or to implore his prayers and be eye-witnesses of his marvellous patience: these were not visits of mere compliment, but of piety and religion: to perform some kind act for him, was to secure some salutary advice, and was generally rewarded by some spiritual blessing, such as compunction, or a renewal of fervour. The most distinguished ecclesiastics visited him, amongst others the Arch-

bishops of Sienna and Florence ; Ippolito received them with the greatest humility and respect. To seculars he inculcated the love and fear of God, and suggested such maxims as were best suited to each one's spiritual profit : those whose conduct required amendment, were moved by the power of his words to a sense of contrition ; they burst forth in tears, and left him full of good purposes. He repeatedly blessed his beloved brethren, and seeing them all in tears at the prospect of his approaching death, he said to them, " Ah ! do not weep, my dear brothers, it is now time rather to exult and rejoice, since I am about to gather the fruit of my past labours ;" and to one whom he perceived was distressed under the idea that his death would prove a serious prejudice to the congregation, he added, " Fear not—God will protect His own work : what is of most importance, is, that concord and peace should flourish amongst you, for this is the first foundation of the well-being of the institute." He afterwards spoke more at length to one of the others, to whom, for the last four years, he had had an idea of ceding the government, as being a man of much fervour, and endowed with the qualifications requisite in such an office : in the private conversation he held with him, he endeavoured to infuse into his soul a true spirit of counsel, prudence, meekness, humility, and other virtues ; then, without expressly telling him that he had already solicited the approval of the Grand-duke and of the Archbishop for him to be his successor, as

guardian of the congregation, he added, "Son, if our Lord should deign to ask thy services, correspond with His designs to the utmost of thy power; be upright in His sight; prepare thyself for His love to suffer, and not to enjoy thyself." We may say that during the last few days of his life, his poor little room was changed into a school of virtue: his words were like burning arrows, penetrating all hearts, and inflaming them with the fire of divine love.

## CHAPTER XI.

SAINTS AND ANGELS COME TO VISIT HIM. HE VALI-  
ANTLY REPULSES THE ASSAULTS OF THE DEVIL. HE  
RECEIVES THE LAST SACRAMENTS AND EXPIRES.

THE moment was now at hand when this blessed soul, released from earthly fetters, was about to fly and receive the crown of justice, which the divine, the eternal Judge, has promised to bestow on those who love Him. Our Lord contributed to render precious the death of this His servant, by allowing him to taste, by anticipation, the delights of Paradise. He enjoyed the presence and intercourse of angels, a troop of whom appeared above the little bed of Ippolito, encouraging him to the combat, and saying to him, "Yet a little longer, and our Lord will unveil to thee that countenance which thou so much desirest to behold." Ippolito could not wholly conceal these heavenly favours; and to

one beloved companion who was assisting him, he owned that the glorious Patriarch S. Francesco and other saints had visibly appeared to him ; they were encircled with superhuman splendour, and they condescended to comfort him under his sufferings, to the indescribable joy of his soul. Notwithstanding this, however, the malicious tempter ceased not to assail him ; sometimes urging him to have recourse to more able physicians, who would adopt more efficacious remedies : sometimes insinuating, that after all his past labours in the service of God, God but ill repaid him, seeing that He thus abandoned him in his hour of greatest need. Ippolito, however, only became the more firm and intrepid : confiding solely in the divine Goodness, he repelled these diabolical suggestions, exclaiming, "Begone, Satan ! let the Lord afflict me as He pleases, provided He is with me, and I with Him, I can willingly suffer for love of Him." Then turning his eyes towards the image of his crucified Lord, which was always close at hand, he added, "Oh ! what a refreshment is this to my burning thirst !" He protested that he was unworthy to suffer anything for God ; and being asked by his confessor whether he found his sickness tiresome and annoying, he answered, "Father, I am happy and tranquil in mind, and rejoice in accomplishing the will of God, and in seeing this rebellious flesh subdued at last." "But," resumed the father, "what wouldest thou say, my son, if these sufferings were to last for several years ?" "I am willing to endure them till the day of judgment," rejoined Ippolito.

In the meantime the brethren were in their oratory, pouring forth fervent prayers to the Father of mercies, for the preservation of a life so precious: the same was done in almost every pious place throughout the city: for this object too, the Archbishop caused the Blessed Sacrament to be exposed to the adoration of the faithful; and so great was the general esteem for the servant of God, that the people flocked in crowds to pray for his cure. But our Lord, who already designed to crown the virtues of His servant, was not pleased to grant the petition of the multitude. The complaint increased rapidly, and the physicians seeing that death was already at the bedside of Ippolito, discharged their duty, by recommending that the Blessed Sacrament should be again administered by way of viaticum. It was evident to the spectators that he who was feasting on the Lamb of God, was something more than an ordinary Christian—he was more like a seraph burning with charity; so great were the transports of his love, on receiving his Lord, who for the last time visited him on earth. Being conscious himself that his malady was rapidly gaining ground, he renewed his fervent entreaties for the administration of Extreme Unction, whilst he was still in the possession of his faculties, in order, that when strengthened by that sacrament, he might more easily triumph over the enemy, and walk on securely to a happy eternity. He received this Sacrament with such recollection and humility, that it would have been difficult to decide, whether humiliation of soul, or joy and con-

tent of heart, most predominated in him. Although grievously oppressed by pains during the succeeding night, he could, nevertheless, affirm that he knew not whether they were internal or external. He seemed at times to slumber, but those who watched him narrowly, perceived that the dying Saint was incessantly appealing to Jesus crucified, and to His dear Mother, "Maria Addolorata." An inattentive observer might have thought him delirious, but it was evident his delirium was nothing else than the recital of pious prayers, and secret converse with his God. In this state he reached the following day, to him the forerunner of perpetual light: those who had been assisting him in the night, did not suppose him to be so near his end, and withdrew to take a little rest. In the course of a few hours, Ippolito was aware that his last moment was at hand, he made a sign to have the candles lighted round the crucifix, and at the same instant raised his hand as if to bless one of his spiritual children: then it was that the two priests who were present, perceived that he was on the point of surrendering his soul to God: they immediately recited the prayers prescribed by the Church for the comfort of the dying, and on reaching the words of the holy prophet, "Return, my soul, into thy rest, because our Lord hath done good to thee:" words which the servant of God had always been accustomed to say when he retired to bed at night, he raised his eyes to the image of his crucified Lord, gazing fixedly for a brief interval on an object so dear



to him, and then calmly resigned his blessed soul into the hands of his Creator on a Friday the 20th of March, 1619, aged fifty-four years, five months, and six days. It was remarked that he expired precisely at the same hour in which our Lord Jesus Christ had breathed his last on the summit of Calvary for the redemption of mankind. Such is the death of the just; and thus is their death rendered precious in the sight of God. Blessed are they who witness such a death, and weeping, learn how to die!

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## CHAPTER XII.

WONDERFUL CONCOURSE OF PERSONS WHEN HIS BODY WAS CARRIED INTO THE ORATORY. HIS BURIAL. MIRACLES, &c.

As soon as the death of Ippolito became publicly known, the inhabitants of Florence flocked in crowds to his house, completely inundating the neighbouring streets. His sanctity was so well known to persons of every rank, that all seemed eager to testify their grateful memory of his benefits; some, by their tears, others by their words, recalled his virtues and eulogized his glorious deeds. Preachers even praised his admirable endowments from the pulpit, and exhorted their hearers to imitate his virtues. This was, in truth, a beautiful triumph of divine beneficence, which was pleased to glorify Ippolito in death, in proportion to the measure of affliction

he had undergone in life. To avoid all confusion and tumult, the Archbishop prudently desired, that towards night, when the crowd had dispersed, the body of the servant of God should be quietly conveyed to the oratory, but these directions were utterly unavailing ; the people continued to congregate in immense numbers, so to satisfy their devotion, it was finally decided to call in the assistance of the fathers called the Riformati, and the priests belonging to the congregation, resigning to them the charge of transporting the body from the house to the oratory. To render still more splendid the testimonies by which our Lord would honour the death of so faithful a servant, He so ordained, that distinguished nobles, illustrious cavaliers, and the most exemplary religious men, should solicit, as a favour, the office of carrying the bier with its precious weight, on their shoulders. The corpse was covered with the insignia of the institute: a garland encircled his temples—a sign of his spotless purity ; and he had the appearance of being in a sweet slumber, rather than in the sleep of death. The sacred deposit being placed in the oratory, the funeral ceremonies were performed on the following morning, when frequent entreaties were made for permission to touch the body with rosaries and flowers ; but the Archbishop, foreseeing that the veneration of the people would pass from fervour to daring, from daring to the spoliation of the holy corpse, published an excommunication against any one who should venture to touch the body, or purloin anything

belonging to it without his express license. Vain was the prohibition ! an over-excited piety deems itself released from a law that opposes its transports. Some cut off the hair, others the beard, whilst they who succeeded in securing a remnant of his clothes, held themselves to be most fortunate. The dissection of the body was performed during the ensuing night ; the lungs were found to be completely corrupted, but no sooner were they extracted, than the body resumed its natural colour, and when afterwards touched with the surgical knife, live blood flowed copiously for three days, which being carefully collected on cotton and pieces of linen, served to gratify the devotion of the faithful, and, later, when applied to the sick, cured many of their complaints. The venerated corpse remained exposed during three days, in order to satisfy the fervent devotion of the people. To moderate the impetuosity of the crowd, his serene Highness sent his own architect to the congregation, with orders to erect a barricade, where, within its inclosure, the weeping brethren might quietly recite their psalms, and guard their precious deposit. On the morning of the third day the Archbishop repaired to the oratory, there to offer the unbloody sacrifice, and to administer the holy communion to several hundred persons. He then delivered a suitable address on the life and actions of the good servant of God, exhorting every one, but more especially the members of the confraternity, to follow his example unceasingly. In the evening, Father Vincenzo Sar-

tiano, of the Minor Observantines, again expatiated on the virtues of the holy man, when his words renewed the grief and tears of his brethren. Owing to the insatiable ardour of the people, it was found impossible to bury the body before the middle of the night; by that time the crowd had nearly dispersed, the body was inclosed in a coffin, and placed in a modest recess, within the wall of the sacristy, behind the high altar of the little oratory. Six days after the death of Ippolito, the brethren resolved to have his body embalmed, when, to the astonishment of every one, it was found without the slightest symptom of decay, and without any unpleasant odour. Such was the preparation for the glorious events which followed the passage of Ippolito from the miseries of this life, to the kingdom of eternal repose. The opinion of his sanctity, and the devotion of the people towards him, did not cease with his death and burial. Many who reverently approached his tomb, were suddenly restored to health, and returned home joyfully thanking God, and exalting the merits of His deceased servant; of these wonders, more will be related in the last part of this work: for the present it will suffice to say, that, to render the memory of Ippolito still more glorious, our Lord permitted him to appear to some, and converse with others after his death, on which occasions his countenance was environed with brilliant rays. As we are compelled to be brief, we will only notice one or two of the more remarkable instances.

A pious priest who was distributing the bread of Angels to the brothers of the congregation, visibly beheld Ippolito: he was raised from the ground, and appeared in the act of embracing some of those who were receiving holy communion. On retiring to his room, the priest was soon immersed in prayer, when the servant of God, surrounded with glory, again appeared to him, and said, "You must assist me." The good priest was surprised, and in a manner stupified by these words; but raising his eyes, which could but ill endure such a blaze of light, he answered, "If you enjoy glory in the bosom of God, how can I, who am still tied to the miseries of this life, assist you?" But Ippolito was silent, and disappeared. The priest concluded that the servant of God meant him to understand that he was to assist the institute, by endeavouring to promote union in its members, and an increase of its numbers: however, on going out of his house, he met Federico Cristofani, the procurator of the process, by whom he was informed that the Archbishop had chosen him, amongst others, to consult on the cause of the servant of God; and at the same time he distinctly heard Ippolito utter these words, "This is what I meant a short time ago, when I bade you help me."

Still more remarkable is the following incident, which happened to a person in Florence, who for a long time had frequented the oratory of Ippolito. Before the death of the servant of God, this man had gone to reside at Naples, where he met with severe tribulations: one day,

as he was imploring the divine assistance in the church of the Carmelites, he suddenly heard a voice distinctly say, "Recommend thyself to Ippolito, who has this moment entered on his eternal repose, and who is now in a state to relieve thee." A few days later, he received news from Florence, that on that very day, and at that very hour, Ippolito had calmly breathed forth his soul. By these, and other similar incidents, the Divine Majesty was pleased to give evidence of the merits of His faithful servant, who, whilst on earth, so well knew how to put to profit the talents with which he was so abundantly enriched.

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## BOOK III.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### ON THE FAITH OF THE SERVANT OF GOD.

WHEN we would give an idea of the extent of an edifice, it suffices to draw an exact plan of it; but if we wish to give a correct notion of the just proportion of its parts, with regard to its elegance and solidity, we must call in the aid of other drawings. In like manner, we may form an idea of a Christian hero from the mere exposition of a blameless and holy life; but if we wish to know the intrinsic value of the vir-

tues which led him to Christian perfection, we must indicate the operations which separately relate to each one of these virtues. We hope, therefore, that after having induced our readers to admire our saintly Ippolito from his birth even until his death, through a life filled with trials and crosses, they will readily follow us now whilst we take a glance at his very sublime virtues, to which of course allusion has been frequently made.

Faith, which, as the apostle of the Gentiles teaches, is the belief of things superior to the human intellect, and which gives merit to all our actions, shone so brilliantly in Ippolito, that we may assert without any danger of mistake, that he was one of those just men who live by faith. From the first dawn of reason to the very last moment of his earthly career, his soul was entirely subject to the control of faith: it was ever the guide of his actions, and the regulator of his affections. In his childhood he was so recollected and modest in the house of God, that he appeared like an ecstatic contemplative, wholly absorbed and ravished in our Lord: the same was observed when he was assisting at sermons or other pious discourses: what can we say of his attention to the presence of God, which was his dearest exercise? Faith represented his Creator as present to him in all places and at all times; therefore, like the apostle, he too might almost have said, that his conversation was in heaven, though he still lived on earth. It would be superfluous to

recapitulate all he went through in founding the great work of the Congregation of Christian Doctrine, in order to instruct both children and adults in the solid principles of faith. We may just mention, that in his sermons he frequently spoke with such transports and vivacity of the greatness of God, as to seem already to have transpierced the veil which conceals Him from our sight.

When he recalled to mind those heroes, who with invincible fortitude encountered death in defence of the faith, there arose within him a desire to emulate them, and filled with holy envy, he used to say, "These are favours which God confers on his saints, not on so vile a sinner as I am." However, if Ippolito was not required to signalise his fortitude before tyrants, we may say his faith was neither less firm or less constant on that account; since, with heroic patience and perfect conformity to the divine will, he underwent a perpetual martyrdom of heavy tribulation, as we have already related. It was precisely for his unshakeable faith that the infernal enemy redoubled his assaults upon him, and so often attacked him like a furious lion. But Ippolito, dreading the loss of the bright gem of faith, resolved not to let himself be taken by surprise. In order not to yield under these repeated assaults, he did not await their coming, but prepared for them beforehand: for this purpose he continually recited the following ejaculations, which, together with a protestation to be made when at the point of death, he wrote



with his own hand: giving, as it does, such a brilliant idea of his faith, we will insert it word for word:

“O my God! Author of the true faith, I firmly believe that in the adorable Trinity, there are three persons in one divine essence and nature. I am willing to die for the confession of this belief.

“Since thou, O Lord Jesus Christ! art the increased wisdom of the Father, it is impossible for Thee to reveal anything that is false. I am ready to give my life, if it so pleases Thee, in defence of this truth.

“O Jesus Christ! Thou art most truly, true God, and true man: would that thy Divine Majesty would permit me to die at the stake for the confession of this belief.

“It is most certain, O my Saviour, that in Thy excessive love for me, Thou dost remain in the most adorable Sacrament of the altar; for the confession of which truth, I desire to subject myself to outrages, and to the flames, for Thy love.

“In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I, Ippolito, protest in thy presence, O holy angel of God, to whom the Divine Mercy gave me in charge from the very moment of my birth;—and before Thee, O Father, and before all of you here present, I confess that I desire and am resolved to die in the true Catholic faith, as professed by the holy Roman Church, in which all the saints of God have died: neither do I regret dying thus soon, nor do I wish to prolong my life; because I

am most happy under whatever is most pleasing to my merciful God, to whom I submit my every wish.

“Moreover, O angel of God! I protest that I will depart from this life under the shield of divine grace, and Thy protection; and I purpose thus to die without any diffidence or doubt of the true faith; so that the great number and grievousness of my sins ought not, and cannot submerge me in the infernal abyss; because I believe that one single drop of the precious blood, shed by Jesus Christ on the cross, would suffice (if it so pleased the Divine Mercy) for the redemption not only of me, a sinner, but of all the human race.

“Moreover I protest that, when I am about to appear at the judgment-seat of God, if I should through any temptation of the devil, weakness of mind, or deficiency of judgment, (which God forbid,) fall into any diffidence or doubt of the faith, now that I am of sound mind, I revoke and annul such an act, and on no account will I consent to that which without full judgment and deliberate will, cannot hold good; and I submit myself in all things to the Divine Mercy.

“Again, as no sinner who confessed and had true contrition for his sins, was ever refused the mercy of God, especially when this is sought for the remission of his sins; so I trust it will be granted to me who desire it with my whole heart. I beseech Thee, O most just God! by the merits of the bitter death of Jesus Christ, and in virtue of His most precious blood shed for

me on the wood of the cross ;—by the merits and prayers of His most holy Mother, and of all His angels and Saints, to grant me grace, and allow me to share Thy mercy.

“Again, I beg by this prayer, humbly offered to Thee, O my Lord ! that Thou wilt deign to receive and number me amongst those, who, predestinated from eternity, will be saved at the last day of judgment : therefore I offer myself, and am ready to endure all the pains of purgatory, in punishment of my sins.

“With these protestations, O holy angel of God ! which are as the last wishes of my soul, I recommend to Thee this my last will and affection ; beseeching thee to obtain three things for me from our Lord Jesus Christ : 1. One of His compassionate looks ; 2. One of His meritorious sighs ; such as He sent up to His Eternal Father during the three hours he hung on the cross : 3. That His most holy Mother, full of grace, will deign to be with me, and assist me at my departure out of this world. By these I hope to overcome all the temptations of the enemy. By these may my sufferings be mitigated, my sins pardoned, and divine mercy be shown me at the moment of my judgment, and for ever.

“I beseech thee also, in thy angelical pity, to succour me in a particular manner when my soul departs from my body ;—then, through thy patronage, may I find my Judge, not rigorous, but placable and merciful ;—may He look upon me with an eye of divine love, such as He regarded us with, whilst He was hanging on the cross for the salvation of the world.

“Finally, O angel of God, to thee I recommend the last hour of my life, that thou mayest guard and defend me from the enemy of our salvation; and I desire that of these my protestations, thou mayest now, and at all times, be my faithful witness and protector, against every danger of my salvation.

“May the Lord watch over and bless † me, and turn his face towards me.

“May the Lord be merciful to me, and give me peace. ✠

“May the Lord give His blessing to me, Ippolito. † Amen.

“Benedicat me † Imperialis Majestas, protegat me † Regalis Divinitas. Custodiat me † Sempiterna Deitas, foveat me † Immensa Trinitas, dirigat me † inestimabilis Bonitas, regat me † Potentia Patris, vivificet me † Sapientia Filii; illuminet me † virtus Spiritus Sancti; Alpha et † Omega Deus et homo sit mihi salus, benedictio, et protectio † Amen.”

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## CHAPTER II.

HIS SINGULAR DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT,  
TO THE MOST HOLY VIRGIN, HIS ANGEL GUARDIAN,  
AND PATRON SAINTS.

ONE admirable fruit of that faith which had extended its branches and struck deep root in the soul of Ippolito, was his tender devotion to the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, so justly

styled the mystery of faith. From his very youth he hungered after this bread of the strong, from which he drew vigour to prosecute his works of piety, together with his sweetest delights. To inward devotion of the heart, he joined the most reverential external worship at all times and places, towards this adorable Sacrament. If he knew that it was publicly exposed to the veneration of the faithful in any church of the city, thither would he repair and remain fixed and immoveable for a long time, immersed in contemplation before his hidden Lord. Whenever the solemn exposition of the quarant'ore took place in the oratory, he spent the whole night there, sometimes in silent contemplation on the divine mystery, sometimes joining aloud with others in singing the praises of God, sometimes exhorting the assistants in the most tender strain, to be grateful to the Lord for this excess of His love. His devout affection for this august Sacrament never shone forth more brightly than when he had to speak of it; he then appeared like another apostle of the Gentiles, all inflamed with charity. This was well shown in particular, in 1617, when the Grand-duke of Tuscany, Cosmo II., having been taken dangerously ill; the Blessed Sacrament was exposed with all possible magnificence in the "Palazzo dei Pitti," to implore from heaven the cure of his serene Highness. The most celebrated orators were invited to preach before this solemn assembly, and amongst others, Ippolito was summoned for this purpose, on account of the high opinion

of sanctity in which he was held. He became so animated whilst expatiating on the grandeurs and wonders of this divine mystery, that he continued speaking for several hours before this immense concourse of people, and was listened to with the utmost attention and silence, even by their serene Highnesses, who compelled him to preach again the following day. Such was the flame of charity which burst forth in his words;—it was the admirable effect of the faith that animated his soul.

Another characteristic mark of a soul distinguished for virtue, is a filial devotion to the great Mother of God; no wonder then, that the servant of God was so signalized for his love and respect towards Mary. In all his necessities he invoked her with full confidence; he always called her by the sweet name of Mother, acknowledged her to be his shield and buckler in every assault; such were the proofs he gave her of his love and reverence. Whenever the clock struck the hour, he recited the angelical salutation in her honour, and the mere sight of one of her images would detain him in admiration for a length of time. The churches and altars dedicated to her, were to him the most delightful places of resort. At the time the persecution raised against him by his adversaries was at its height, he undertook a pious pilgrimage to the holy house of Loretto, the house that was sanctified by the presence of a God made Man. On arriving at the door of the sanctuary, and contemplating the divine wonders there operated,

his soul was inundated with such inexpressible delight, that he seemed in a manner beside himself; neither did he perceive the priests when they presented him the precious relics to kiss, nor feel the pushes of his companion who warned him of his immoderate weeping. However, when he had given full vent to his devotion, he assured the said companion, that the great Mother had granted him the desired favour, and that it was owing to her help that he had not died on the spot, under such an excess of bliss.

We must not silently pass over the respectful homage which he everywhere paid to his holy guardian angel. Remembering the assistance received from him on all occasions, but especially in dangerous journeys, he showed himself most grateful to him, and continually implored his aid with child-like confidence. It was sufficient to hear him speak of this faithful guardian, to understand how much he loved and respected him. One thing that he most warmly recommended to his beloved brethren, was devotion to their guardian angels. He explained to them the efficacy of their patronage, reminded them of the exalted benefits received through them, and urged the utility of frequently invoking them, both in temporal and spiritual necessities. He who is himself grateful, can hardly do less than inspire gratitude in the hearts of others.

Although numerous were the blessed citizens of heaven, for whom he professed sincere veneration, of which he gave evident proofs; he honoured with more special devotion the glorious

patriarch S. Francesco, the patron and advocate of his congregation. In testimony of this his devotion, he went to visit the holy mount of Alvernia, where, arriving together with his companions, he entered the grotto in which the holy man of Assisi was accustomed to hold intercourse with God; with a lively faith Ippolito loudly invoked the seraphical father, and besought his assistance in the government of the institute. His companions quitted the grotto, leaving him alone there, where amidst sighs and tears he remained several hours in prayer, kneeling on the bare ground, and after a long time was found wholly ravished out of his senses and absorbed in the Lord.

He was accustomed to show the same pious respect to S. Catherine of Sienna. In the height of summer he set out one day from Florence with a few of his associates to visit her sanctuary, and at the same time gratify his own piety. Ardent were the prayers he poured forth on the journey, admirable was the fervour he displayed on his arrival, and perfect was the recollection of soul with which he returned home. We should do injustice to his piety, if we did not add a few words on the manner in which the servant of God compassionated the sufferings of the poor souls in purgatory; no day passed without his offering most fervent prayers in their behalf. Amongst other pious customs, bearing upon this point, which he established in his congregation, was that of a general communion on Thursday in Sexagesima week, to be offered with



the express intention of accelerating the admission of those poor prisoners into the blessed kingdom of peace.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### HIS HOPE, AND LOVE OF POVERTY.

As water flows from its source, so does hope spring from faith. A hope resting entirely on the Divine promises, has eternal beatitude for its principal object, which we may obtain through the merits of Jesus Christ, together with a faithful co-operation on our part. In this virtue, no less than in faith, did our good servant of God signalize himself, as we are now about to explain. He proved on all occasions, how firm and generous was his hope. To be convinced of this, it would suffice to hear the numerous discourses which he so fervently delivered in the oratory, and which he generally concluded with lively acts of hope, exhorting his hearers to cast themselves unreservedly into the arms of Divine Mercy. Nor ought we to wonder that this beautiful virtue took such deep root in him, seeing, that whilst he trusted solely to the goodness of God, God seemed to make it His glory to load him with His gifts. The infinite merits of the Redeemer, who, to make us co-heirs with Him, was pleased to assume mortality, taking the form of a slave and shedding His blood for us, was the corner-stone on which he rested. Most

lowly was his own opinion of himself; he believed himself to be the greatest sinner on earth; nevertheless, when he turned his thoughts on his amiable Jesus, he forgot his own demerits, and hope so completely filled his heart, that there was no room left for fear. When discoursing on the important affair of his salvation, he was heard to say, that through the merits of his crucified Jesus, he trusted he was of the number of the elect. It would appear as if he only thought of, and could only exhort to, a lively hope in the bitter passion of our Saviour, in memory whereof, as we have already observed, he introduced the custom of certain devout exercises every Friday evening in the oratory of the congregation. We must not, however, suppose that the hope of Ippolito was not accompanied by that salutary fear so necessary to a Christian; he well knew that we must work out our salvation with fear and trembling; therefore, he revolved in his mind those thoughts best calculated to effect this. The terrifying truths of eternity, of the rigour of Divine justice, and especially of the last judgment, were the frequent subjects of his meditation; for several years these were the maxims on which he constantly preached, and for one whole winter he confined himself to this single formidable text, "*Scrutabor Jerusalem in lucernis*;" showing how terrible that day will be, when in presence of all creatures, the Lord shall discuss the deeds of men. When explaining these alarming truths, so lively was his own terror, that, overwhelmed with holy fear, he de-

clared that he deserved a thousand hells, and was utterly unworthy of the divine favour. In the midst of these fearful acknowledgments, it was, however, wonderful to see him turn all at once to his adorable Lord, and entirely abandon himself to His sweet mercy. In a word, he feared and hoped; fear and hope were the two inseparable companions of his mortal pilgrimage; they directed all his steps.

To hope Ippolito joined his own faithful and constant co-operation. It is a common artifice with the devil, (and one by means of which he seduces vast multitudes of souls,) to flatter us with the hope of obtaining the eternal rewards of God, without using any means on our part to secure them. Ippolito was far from giving in to any such delusion; on the contrary, he followed the doctrine of the Prince of the apostles, who teaches us that if we would make sure our election, we must co-operate with grace. Docile to divine inspiration, exact in the observance of the evangelical counsels, cautious in turning every moment to profit, he cheerfully and fervently endeavoured securely to reach his last end.

From such bright hope, nothing less than the most admirable effects could be expected. The first of these, was, the enabling him to live so entirely disengaged from the fleeting goods of this world, that his sole occupation seemed to consist in sighing for the everlasting goods of heaven: he looked upon the former as real miseries, idle vanity, wholly unworthy of the human heart.

God was the sole object of his love and of his desires. He often thanked the Lord for having placed him in a state of poverty; rejoicing that by this means he could imitate the great Master of the universe, who disdained not to become poor for love of us. His deeds corresponded with his words. A wealthy person who highly esteemed Ippolito, resolved to make him his heir, and to bestow on him at once the sum of three thousand crowns, and thus raise him from his state of indigence; to effect his object he started from Florence, in company with a notary to Fiesoli, where the servant of God happened to be; he received the gentlemen with the greatest respect, but resolutely declined the inheritance. Considering the straitened circumstances of Ippolito at that very time, this offer might have been deemed an opportune subsidy sent from heaven; nevertheless, he did not hesitate a moment in rejecting a proposal which he looked upon as contrary to his beloved poverty, as well as to Christian confidence. This was not the first instance of generous disengagement on the part of Ippolito. He refused the presidency of the confraternity of the Archangel Raphael, frequented by noblemen, and endowed with ample revenues; preferring to found a poor congregation himself, in imitation of the seraphical Father S. Francesco.

Another wonderful effect of his hope, was his unvaried cheerfulness of countenance as well as of heart, in the midst of his most bitter anguish: the more severe and heavy were his crosses and

trials, the more happy did he appear. When any one condoled with him under his afflictions, he generally answered, "Fear not: we have an everlasting Provider, who watches to protect us. My dear Jesus has always been prompt to succour me, and I rest my confidence in Him alone: we read in His Gospel, 'Consider the fowls of the air, they neither spin nor sow, nor do they gather into barns; our heavenly Father feeds them.'"

He believed, without doubting, that nothing will be wanting to those who seek the kingdom of God; hence Ippolito abandoned himself unreservedly to the divine assistance, both with regard to the execution of the plan of his institute, and his own personal necessities. It is well known that he accomplished the former by the succour of Providence alone; whilst for the latter, he disbursed considerable sums, though wholly unpossessed of any pecuniary aid. The reader need only remember what we have previously related on this point, when he will easily understand the high degree of this virtue to which Ippolito attained; and how wonderfully his generous resignation was repaid by divine Providence: the confiding hope of the servant, corresponded as we may say, with the goodness of the Master.

Divine beneficence was no less partial in supplying him with the temporal necessities of life. Through the unkindness of his adversaries, he and his family were one day entirely without food; as usual, he had recourse to fervent prayer: it happened precisely on the feast of Saint Ignatius, founder of the ever-illustrious and re-

spected Society of Jesus, to whom he recommended himself with the greatest fervour: after being refreshed with the Bread of Angels, this glorious Saint visibly appeared to him, consoling him in his hopes, and assuring him that assistance was at hand. Almost immediately on his return home, a youth in a peasant's dress knocked at the door, having with him a horse laden with bread, wine, and other eatables; after depositing his load in the house of Ippolito, he suddenly disappeared, without uttering a word which could indicate the person of the benefactor.

In a season of great scarcity, Ippolito was deprived even of the scanty remuneration which his work would otherwise have brought in; and he one day found himself and all his family without a morsel of bread; as usual, he cast his eyes on God with great confidence, and on returning home from church, he discovered about eighteen crowns in the bottom of an old chest, which he was inspired to open, but in which neither he nor any of the family were ever known to have put money. In an equally wonderful manner our good Ippolito was relieved one evening, when, the supper hour being at hand, there was no food to eat: he tried to comfort his poor mother, exhorting her to hope in God, who never abandons those who rely on Him: in the course of a few moments, a youth of very beautiful aspect made his appearance, supplied them with an abundance of provisions, and departed without saying who he was. It would really seem as if our Lord reduced him thus to the extremity of misery, to

reward his confidence precisely at the moment it was most needed.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### HIS CHARITY TOWARDS GOD.

IPPOLITO was convinced that our smaller sacrifices cannot prove acceptable to God, if we are unmindful of the greatest of all, namely, charity. If he was sublime in faith, firm and invincible in hope, he signalised himself in a still more special manner, by his love of God. It would be impossible to describe his diligent exactitude in fulfilling that precept which is the foremost in dignity, whether we consider it with regard to the legislator, or to the obligations of those who receive the law. No sooner in his childhood had faith given him a knowledge of God, than he began to love Him above all things, looking upon Him as the sole and last end, to which the operations of the whole man should be directed. He conceived not an idea, uttered not a word, performed not an action, which did not proceed from, and tend to, love. The will of God was his will: his inclinations were ruled by the laws of God; and he studied in everything how he might best please God. How much this love increased as he advanced in years, and to what a height of perfection he attained in this mortal life, may be inferred from what has been already stated when treating of his faith and hope. But, with

a view to the reader's profit, it will not be inappropriate to give a few more details on so important a subject.

The distinctive mark of true love, is never to be disunited in thought from the object loved. Ippolito having consecrated all his affections to God, studied to be ever united with Him in every possible way. After the short rest at night which he allowed his weary limbs, he arose at early dawn to offer his first thoughts to the Lord. He uttered most fervent ejaculations of perfect conformity to the will of God throughout all occurrences of the day, whilst he was putting on his clothes; after which kneeling down before his crucifix, he arranged the matter of his examen of conscience, and recited his usual prayers, with all due fervour and devotion. He then left home to hear mass, and whilst assisting daily at the unbloody sacrifice, he was so completely penetrated with holy thoughts, as to be ravished in God, and thus his love was rendered more and more ardent.

His manual labour which his poor condition demanded of him, was no hindrance to the exercise of this love, for he placed some pious book before his eyes, on which he glanced from time to time, and his devout reflections served as salutary food to his soul. Amidst his toils his pious ejaculations were incessant; sometimes he said, "O Lord, I beseech Thee to exercise full dominion over my heart!" or, "O good Jesus, I offer myself wholly to Thee: permit me not to possess anything else on earth besides Thee!"



or, "O my Jesus, how great is Thy love! how good Thou art!" These aspirations accompanied all his exterior employments, brought Almighty God present to him in every place, and more and more inflamed his love. He gave manifest proofs of this love: in conversation he seemed unable to speak of anything but God and His holy love: when speaking, his beaming countenance clearly indicated what was passing in his heart: at the very height of his trials he only uttered the adorable name of Jesus, but in such a manner that the persons present were convinced the voice proceeded from a breast burning with divine love.

To these proofs of his love, may be added the purity and rectitude of his intentions, which led him never to seek anything but the glory of Jesus. Those who love truly, have no other aim than to please the object loved: on this point it would be difficult to conceive the attention and circumspection of the servant of God.

No desire of fame, emolument, or honour, ever induced him to undertake any of his important enterprises; the love of God alone was the main-spring which directed his toils and fatigues. Had not this love directed him amidst the incessant contradictions of men, amidst the insults and injuries with which his enemies loaded him, he could not for such a length of time have persevered in the thorny paths of virtue.

I need not, by way of further proving the love which inflamed the heart of Ippolito, repeat what has been said elsewhere of the fervour with which

he approached the eucharistic banquet, at first three times a week, but afterwards every day, by the advice of his confessor ; nor refer again to the visits he made to the adorable Sacrament, either when exposed to the veneration of the faithful, or inclosed within the tabernacle. I shall say nothing of his desire to follow his amiable Redeemer in His bitter sufferings, and even to His cross ; nothing, in fine, of the many virtuous actions, which although springing from some other immediate cause, may, nevertheless, be referred to his love of God, as having their source in it, receiving their support from it, and being directed to it, as their final term. Ippolito, who loved God with all his strength and with all his heart, looked to Him in every action, referred all to Him, and with equal submission received from Him misfortunes and favours ; was ever ready to do whatever He pleased, and to endure the most overwhelming disasters for the accomplishment of His holy will.

I must not, however, silently pass over his total exemption from self-love, which he looked upon as the enemy of Divine love. He neglected no means of overcoming such an adversary, or of acquiring that holy self-hatred so strongly recommended in the Gospel. He generously resisted every base, natural inclination ; never seeking either his own pleasure or his own will. To suppress every repugnance, to combat his own feelings, and conform himself to the Divine Will, was the rule of his life, and the end of all his endeavours : no earthly affection, however just it

might be, held dominion over his noble heart. Although the institute he founded, might with reason be compared to the pupil of his eye, and though he tenderly loved it, yet he loved it with no inordinate affection; for had God so permitted, that, through the malice of men, so fine a structure, on the face of which was stamped, that it was the work of God, had been destroyed to its very foundations, he protested that he should have continued undisturbed, and not have abandoned himself to grief. His acts did not belie his words. When, owing to the persecutions of his enemies, the members of his institute were dispersed, and only two faithful and affectionate brethren remained true to him, he was asked whether he should not be much grieved if these two also left him; he answered, that having committed himself entirely to God, he found great comfort in suffering all for His love, and in the fulfilment of His holy designs.

The best proof, however, of his ardent love of God, was his implacable hatred of every sort of sin. He had such a horror of sin, that he saw no real evil in anything, excepting an offence against God. He protested, both before God and man, that rather than grievously offend the Divine Majesty, he would prefer death, and even hell. The very word crime aroused and horrified him; and he not only carefully refrained from such things as had a shadow of guilt about them, but even from the slightest voluntary defect. Father Giovanni Battista Zafferani, of the Society of Jesus, and Father Alberto Lioni, a Carmelite, who

were his confessors, both declared in the processes, that they never discovered in his confessions any venial sin committed with deliberation ; but, on the contrary, had observed such a purity of heart, as showed how foreign to him were those ordinary defects, into which our miserable frailty so often throws us. Not content with feeling this hatred of sin in his own soul, he zealously and fervently strove to instil it in the souls of others. In the discourses he so often made to the members of the congregation, the evils of sin formed one of his chief topics. He grieved for every crime, and tried to induce others to weep bitterly over sin. The season of carnival, when guilt chiefly revels, was to him a time of true anguish. He bitterly deplored the offences committed against his dear Jesus, and to prevent them as far as possible, he introduced certain pious devotions at the oratory, as before related. If he met with any one who had no scruple of offending God or their neighbour, even in slight things, his zeal was immediately enkindled and he gave a sharp reproof. With reference to this subject, he used often to make a comparison, as expressive as it was simple: "As the barnacle," said he, "though but a small fish, fastening itself upon a ship in full sail, checks its progress, so do slight defects hinder our advancement in Christian perfection."

All the admirable effects here related of him, may be ascribed to his holy love of God. The tears which he shed in such abundance when kneeling before his crucifix ; the inflamed impetuosity which he was unable to restrain when

he approached the holy Eucharistic banquet ; the sweet ecstasies and raptures which seized him when at prayer ; were all produced by the lively flame that burned in his soul, and which acting outwardly upon the senses, made him the victim of holy love. The rough hair-shirts, the prolonged scourgings, to which he devoted himself from his earliest years, in order to subdue his wayward senses ; the admirable and extraordinary patience with which he bore injuries ; his frequently reiterated declaration, that nothing in life was so sweet to him as to suffer for God ; were all sparks of that flame, which, concentrated in his heart, made him live in a continual, delightful furnace of charity. But deferring for the present what might be added on this subject, we will close this chapter by detailing a few circumstances, all tending to prove his great zeal for the honour of God ; and this will lead us to admire another noble effect which holy love produced in him.

Ippolito set no limits to his zeal for the glory of God, which he perpetually strove to promote : it cannot, however, be denied that his efforts became redoubled, when there was question of preventing the commission of offences in those places where our Lord demands our homage in a special manner. Hence he was most anxious that due respect should be shown to those august temples wherein Almighty God dwells amongst us, and wherein He establishes the throne of His tremendous majesty. If he saw any one speak in the church beyond what was strictly necessary, he either made a sign of silence, or, approaching

the party, gently reminded them that the church was not a place for gossip, but for prayer. To accustom children to a habit of recollection and pious decorum in the house of God, he adopted a plan suggested by his zeal, which though it would have been inopportune, and perhaps reprehensible, where training adults was in question, will be thought neither strange nor unreasonable with regard to young children, by those at least who thoroughly understand the characteristics of that age. He made two of the children stand up, one of whom he had previously desired to mimic, or rather copy, the conduct of those who behaved irreverently in the church; whilst the other was to imitate the manner and demeanour of pious persons: his object was, that by contrasting these expressive copies, his dear children might from their infancy attach themselves to holy modesty and decorum in the house of God.

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## CHAPTER V.

### HIS CHARITY TOWARDS HIS NEIGHBOUR'S SPIRITUAL WANTS.

THE precept of loving one's neighbour is so similar to that of loving God, that the two may be not inaptly compared to twin-born children. As the precept of loving God ranks in the first place, and the precept of loving one's neighbour in the second; it follows, therefore, that we ought to love our neighbour with reference to God, and

not love God with reference to our neighbour. They are, however, so closely united, that they cannot possibly be separated, nor can we truly love our neighbour unless we love God, in the same way that nature dictates the love of one's own father, and of one's own brother. The observance of this law, which is as obligatory as that of loving God Himself, was so precious to Ippolito, that we may reasonably affirm that he consumed his life in one continued and laborious exercise of charity towards his neighbour. For this, he spared neither toil nor fatigue, heeded no danger, feared no hindrance. To be convinced of this, we need only cast a glance at the whole course of his life, as already detailed by us. But as this may in some degree be styled his characteristic virtue, and the chief aim of all his magnanimous undertakings, much as we have before stated on the subject, more yet remains to be told; whether we consider his endeavours to awaken the love of God in all hearts, or his indefatigable zeal in guarding souls from danger and from the contagion of vice, or, finally, his care in leading the good onwards to perfection by the practice of the most sublime Christian virtues.

To procure the spiritual advantage of his neighbour, was the first object of Ippolito. The bright flame of Divine love which burned in his heart, made him desirous that every one should ardently love our Lord, because if they loved Him they would abstain from offending Him, and secure their own salvation. And as the love of one's

neighbour principally consists in this, he studied both by word and example to promote the honour of God, to prevent sin, and to remove such obstacles as might be a hindrance to good works. At Modena, where, as we before said, he spent some days establishing a pious institute, he was asked by a great friend of his, (the gentleman who provided him with board and lodging,) why he did not sit down to take his meals, instead of eating as he did, here and there, evidently thinking of something else? The servant of God answered, "It is owing to my desire for the salvation of souls, which day and night perpetually spurs me on; and I cannot find the means of satisfying this, otherwise than by frequently musing thereupon." In truth, he would have wished to renew the spirit of the primitive Christians, and unite all hearts in brotherly love, as much as if he himself had been commanded to procure the salvation of every one.

Speaking of sinners, there was nothing he so much desired, nothing for which he showed himself so solicitous, as for their conversion. When he knew of the sincere, permanent amendment of any such, he exulted with delight. His countenance never wore an expression of deep grief, excepting when he met with some one obstinate in vice and deaf to the word of God. In such a case as this, new flames were added to his charity; he poured forth most fervent prayers to the Lord, redoubled his efficacious exhortations, and tried in every possible way to make these persons sensible of their deplorable state, and



persuade them to a true and lasting repentance : sometimes representing to them the shortness of life ; at other times insisting on the awful moment of death, or the summons to the dread tribunal of the Divine Judge ; persevering so indefatigably, that the most perverse and obdurate yielded to him at last, and deplored their transgressions. An accident worth relating occurred on his journey to Sienna, when he went there to honour the sanctuary of his special patroness S. Catarina. He and his companions, on reaching Staggia, decided on making a halt there, and happened to come in contact with a very profligate tavern-keeper. A superior light enabled Ippolito to see the dreadful state of this unhappy man's soul, so he called for him, and began to converse with him as cordially as if he had been in the best dispositions, introducing some spiritual subject, in hopes of winning him from the filth of sin. The inn-keeper got into a great passion, saying, "I came here to get money, not to listen to your sermons !" The heart of our good servant of God was pained exceedingly, but with that sweetness which so peculiarly characterised him, he undertook to depict in most lively colours, the danger he was in of perishing eternally, should he die whilst still enslaved to sin : unable to withstand the vivid picture of his own deplorable state, the man was so completely moved and penetrated, that he wept bitterly over his past guilt, cleansed his soul by means of a general confession, and ever after led a moral Christian life. Nor was this the only instance in which the

servant of God, unmindful of his own safety, exposed himself in a spirit of charity, to the insults of others, for the benefit of their souls. Somewhere near the gate of S. Gallo, he one day encountered a number of young sportsmen, whose licentious discourse and immodest conduct was alike scandalous to others, and offensive to God. Ippolito, whose only aim was to prevent sin and the eternal ruin of souls, courageously opposed them, and tried to check their insults against the Most High, though he well knew that by doing so, he was exposing himself to their fury. So far from being ashamed and confounded at his friendly remonstrances, these wicked youths, simultaneously fell on him with their sticks, and left him half dead. Ippolito endured their blows and injuries with indescribable patience, being much more anxious to defend God's honour, and try to save souls, than he was about his own ill-treatment. On this occasion he showed by deeds, what he had so often expressed in words, namely, that he was most ready to endure every injury, nay, even give his life, to hinder offence against God or the ruin of souls.

Two of his disciples, instigated by the devil, abandoned the pious practices to which they had for some time devoted themselves under his direction, and formed an intimacy with a worthless woman who had seduced them. As soon as Ippolito became aware of this, he resolved to cut off a disorder of this nature, and, inspired by God, he went himself to the woman's house, where the two young men were actually dining

with her: laying aside all invective, he, with his usual gentleness, adroitly drew them from the house, and then gave them a seasonable correction; they again returned to the service of God, and gave themselves to it with more fervour and perseverance than before.

It was customary at Florence on the birthday of the Grand-duke, to celebrate the occasion with popular festivities, consisting chiefly of tilting, sham-fights, merry-makings, &c.; numbers gave way to intemperance, and a thousand other excesses. Animated by his spirit of charity, Ippolito planned how he might best hinder these offences against God, as well as the serious injuries which always resulted to so many different families. He represented the pernicious consequences springing from these exhibitions to the Grand-duke himself, who, having the highest esteem and veneration for the servant of God, gave orders for the cessation of these games, and they were abolished accordingly from that time.

If such was the generous charity of the holy man for the good of souls, and if he showed such zeal for the prevention of sin, still greater was his ardour in behalf of those souls who, pursuing the path of virtue, aspired to perfection. The number was not small of those whom he directed in the ways of the Lord, as they themselves bore witness in the processes. To converse with Ippolito, they said, or to consult him on their spiritual necessities, was a certain means of obtaining salutary advice, and rules and maxims

suited to the most perfect. They moreover affirmed, that seeing in him so ardent a desire for their progress, it was scarcely possible for them to do otherwise than detest their sins and purpose amendment: finally, they added, that there was no time or place in which he could promote their spiritual advantage, that he did not strive effectually to do so. In fact, he so completely devoted himself to the service of his neighbour, that he allowed himself no resting time. In addition to the spiritual practices which he introduced, and the frequent discourses he delivered to the congregation, he kindly welcomed all who had recourse to him on spiritual affairs. Not only the simple people, but even distinguished persons of every rank availed themselves of his advice. Like an affectionate and universal father, he made himself all to all, that he might gain all to God. When the meetings of the confraternity broke up, he generally remained behind, so that every one might easily have access to him. Even when at home, great part of the evening was often spent in giving counsel and instruction to those who sought it; nor was it by any means unusual with him to spend as many as sixteen consecutive hours in the service of his neighbour.

## CHAPTER VI.

HIS CHARITY TOWARDS HIS NEIGHBOUR'S TEMPORAL  
WANTS.

IF, during the whole course of his life, the servant of God incessantly devoted his charity to the benefit of the souls of others, certainly he made equal endeavours to relieve their temporal necessities. Of the many poor who presented themselves to him, or whose distresses became known to him, all were assisted by him. As widows, orphans, and the helpless, are the objects of the greatest compassion in the eyes both of God and men, towards these did Ippolito chiefly exercise his charity by continually succouring them. When some timid lamb was in danger of falling into the fangs of the wolf, he, like the Shepherd of the gospel, hastened in search of it; when found, he gently convinced her of her danger, and undertook to place her in safety, by removing her from the scene of peril, and furnishing pecuniary assistance. If we would comprehend the height to which he carried his charity, we need only reflect on the means by which he supplied the necessities of so many indigent beings. In the first place, he deprived himself of absolute necessities, for he could not do otherwise in presence of their distress; but when he was completely destitute himself, he would borrow a certain sum from

one of his friends, and when the latter occasionally advised him to take a little care of himself, and to be less prodigal and generous to others, Ippolito generally answered, "God sends the poor to me, to be consoled; He is so munificent, that He never allows himself to be out-done in courtesy, and has promised everlasting life to those who in His name give a cup of cold water to the poor." In a word, no one ever applied to him, without being relieved in the best manner possible; his greatest gratification, however, was to afford relief to the bashful poor, or persons who had been reduced by misfortune. Unlike some of those, who throw down a small coin to some miserable creature, and whose merit evaporates in vain ostentation, Ippolito was mindful of our Lord's injunction, "Let not thy left-hand know what the right-hand doth," and he carefully studied to conceal his indefatigable offices of charity.

It would be difficult to describe his eager endeavours to enkindle in all hearts a spirit of compassion for the poor. He had no friend or acquaintance on whom he did not strongly impress the duty of almsgiving, by which means they might secure a throne in heaven. When speaking to the wealthy on this subject, he was accustomed to tell them, that their superfluous wealth with which Providence had abundantly enriched them, ought to be employed for the benefit of the distressed; that they ought not to consider themselves absolute masters, but only administrators of it. When preaching in

the congregation, there was nothing he so much wished to impress on the minds of his brethren, and of others who were hearkening to him, as devotion to works of charity. One evening, when he was preaching on the effects of charity, a Cardinal who was present was so much touched, that having a large sum of money in gold about him, he gave the whole of it, together with his purse, which being of exquisite materials and workmanship, was of course very valuable, and desired that the whole should be applied to the relief of the poor. Nor was this the first time this pious cardinal had placed money at the disposal of Ippolito for the benefit of the distressed: on one occasion he gave as much as two hundred crowns for this purpose.

The public hospitals, especially that of S. Maria Nuova, of which Ippolito was one of the chief institutors, were the places in which his charity shone forth most brilliantly. He was at all times ready to serve the poor sick; the meanest and most nauseous offices were his greatest delight; and whilst serving those unfortunate sufferers, he felt that he was performing an act agreeable to his beloved Lord. He sedulously exhorted those undergoing acute pain, to suffer patiently, and recommended perfect resignation under obstinate and dangerous maladies. When any one was to be fortified with the last sacraments, he was indefatigable in suggesting motives for detesting sin, and in insinuating those acts which best dispose us for our last passage.

Any poor sick or dying persons in the town

experienced the same charity from him if they wished it. Like an attentive charitable physician, he went about from place to place, and street to street, ready to succour all. Though continually called upon in this way, he heeded no fatigue or inconvenience ; he visited all indifferently, exhorting some to perfect resignation, some to a lively detestation of sin ; others to forgive injuries ; others to resist the suggestions of the devil ; others, willingly to accept of death for love of that God who so willingly embraced death for love of us. Being comforted by his words and by his cheerful countenance, the sick seemed not to feel their sufferings, the devil seemed to lose his power over their minds, and death seemed deprived of its horrors, when he was with them. To render his visits still more desirable, our Lord was often pleased to favour them with prodigies. As the rising sun dispels the darkness, so did the touch of his hand often remove the most inveterate complaints, subdue the assaults or defeat the schemes of the malicious fiend ; doubts, diffidence, and terror, vanished at his words. We might relate numerous instances of this, but for the sake of brevity we omit them.

Ippolito, likewise, signalised his charity towards the unfortunate victims of human justice. Moved to compassion, he neglected no means of succouring them, and of preparing them for their sad end : his endeavours in this respect were not unsuccessful, for many of these perverse and obdurate men, who would listen to nothing



connected with God or religion, were won over by the efficacy and gentleness of his words, and their hard hearts were softened.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS ADMIRABLE PRUDENCE.

SUCH is the admirable temperament of Christian morals, that the various virtues mutually sustain each other; and though each one seems to bear reference to some particular object, they all unite and tend to one and the same end. Though the three principal virtues of which we have hitherto treated, are called perfect; nevertheless, considered with reference to the variety of actions and our particular duties, they suppose the practice of the cardinal virtues. Of these, prudence, with good reason, takes the first rank: it may be said to rule all human actions, and suggests the best means of practising other virtues. That the soul of our good servant of God was abundantly enriched with this virtue, will be evident to any one who reflects on the admirable details of his life. Not to retrace an already-beaten path, I will say nothing of the proofs he gave of this, even from his earliest years. It will suffice to remind the reader, that, from the first dawn of reason, Ippolito aimed only at the acquisition of the Supreme Good, and he knew how to select and adopt the means best suited to the attainment

of this end. Inclined as he was to the religious state, he would have embraced its system with transports, if, reflecting on the obstacles which opposed his wishes, he had not followed the counsels of his director, and submitted in a spirit of obedience. It is true, he considered those most happy, who, retired in the cloister, at a distance from the dangers and attractions of the world, can with full liberty devote themselves to the service of God and their own sanctification; yet he did not on this account quarrel with the condition in which our Lord was pleased to place him; for he was fully persuaded, that we ought all to be content, and may also be happy in the state destined for us by Providence, if we will but use the means proportioned thereunto, and accomplish our respective duties therein. Ippolito followed this maxim so exactly, that though distracted by his daily toil, he so well knew how to unite the study of Christian perfection with manual labour, that the latter never proved a hindrance to the former. Directing all things to his last end, he had no other aim than the glory of God and his own sanctification. He was ever most exact in observing the precepts and counsels of the Gospel, not losing sight of his own spiritual profit for the sake of assisting his neighbour. When about to undertake any affair, he invariably had recourse to prayer, and then placed his trust in God for the result. In difficult enterprises he did not rely much on his own judgment, but asked the advice of experienced per-

sons, and generally deferred to their opinion. Slow in resolving, prudent in executing, he clearly showed that he possessed that rare virtue which is derived from the Most High alone.

But to this rare virtue, by means of which he knew how to regulate himself, Ippolito added the equally difficult talent, of directing others well. In proof of this, we need only refer to the institute of the Christian Doctrine, opposed as it was by the spirit of evil; and to the exalted wisdom with which he guided so many souls in the ways of God. As we have sufficiently dwelt on this elsewhere, we may pass on and notice some instances of his admirable prudence, beginning with his mode of giving counsel. On this point, he would not follow the dictates of human prudence; relying solely on the science of the saints, for that is the only true rule of counsel. The following is the case of a priest who had been received into a religious order when very young: he persevered in it for several years, though suffering from bodily ailments, which at length led him to decide on leaving the order, and he procured the requisite license from his superior to this effect. But soon afterwards, he was haunted with the idea that he could not thus remain in the world, without breaking the vow previously made to God. In order to quiet his conscience, he one day had recourse to the servant of God, and requested his opinion. Ippolito listened to him attentively; and answered that on such a matter, it was adviseable to proceed with caution; not

to follow at once the suggestions of human prudence, but rather to have recourse to God : the two agreed, therefore, to implore the divine aid for the space of a week, both applying fasting, and prayer to this intention. On the morning of the eighth day, whilst the priest was offering the adorable Sacrifice of the mass, after the consecration he heard himself distinctly called by his name, and these precise words followed : “ Ought you not to hold yourself obliged to Him, who, when you were at a dangerous age, placed you in a house, where, together with good conduct, you might acquire knowledge and learning ; and who afterwards withdrew you from this place in order that you might benefit your neighbour ? ” Having finished his mass, the priest, whilst still in a state of astonishment, repaired to the congregation, to ascertain with what our Lord had inspired the mind of Ippolito ; no sooner did the servant of God see him, than he addressed him in the very same words which he had so recently heard at the altar : they concluded, therefore, that our Lord would be served by the good priest in the world.

It is quite evident from this and other similar incidents, that Ippolito was endowed by God with the spirit of wisdom and counsel, requisite for the good direction of his neighbour. Those who formed a plan of life according to his advice, whether in the religious or secular state, bore witness to the world, that, to follow his counsels, was to be sure of successful results. Persons applied to him under the most intricate and

difficult affairs, both spiritual and temporal, deeming it almost impossible for him not to be able to discover a remedy. Ippolito always turned to God in the first place, and then with a countenance which inspired confidence, he unravelled the difficulties in such a manner, that nobody could wish for more suitable advice than he gave, so well was it adapted to each respective case; they all confessed that the spirit of the Lord really dwelt in him; and on one occasion the Grand-duke Cosmo II. said he had never conversed with any one possessed of such consummate prudence as Ippolito.

This virtue was no less admirable in the servant of God when he had occasion to correct others. His corrections were given with so much gentleness, that far from offending, they seemed to oblige and delight the delinquent. Not, however, that he knew not how to join earnestness with sweetness when necessary, especially towards such of the brotherhood as publicly offended. In this view, he introduced certain public mortifications in the oratory; but at the moment he was obliged to impose them on any one, he would turn to the others who were present, and say, "You see what my conscience compels me to do, nor could I ever bring myself to do it, were it not a point of duty." In this way he conciliated their regard, whilst he also inspired fear. Generally speaking he was much more inclined to gentleness than to rigour; and he carefully studied the natural inclinations of each individual. He strove to mortify the audacious, to encourage

the timid, and to instil holy cheerfulness into the melancholy; austere only to himself, he did not, in matters of mortification, apply the measure of his own fervour to others. He never introduced any spiritual exercise in the Congregation, without having first made the experiment himself.

The salutary instructions by which he daily strove to promote Christian perfection in his brethren, will enable us to judge how high a degree of prudence he had attained; and as they may be useful to the pious reader, we will give them as copied from his own hand-writing:

“Before undertaking a truly Christian life, thou must so dispose thy soul as not to care for ill-usage, toils, inconveniences, and difficulties, for the love of God and thy salvation.

“Be always resolved to do well, guard against evil, ever striving to go on from good to better.

“Be cautious in all things, being careful to do all with good judgment.

“Be ever devout and cheerful in all spiritual things, and obey him who counsels thee to do well.

“As far as possible, be chaste in mind and body, correcting and eradicating evil inclinations.

“Exercise thyself faithfully in works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual, for the love of God.

“Rejoice in the welfare of thy neighbour; desire not the happiness of others; be content in the state where God has placed thee.

Humble thyself in word and deed ; and if need-  
ul, subject thyself to all to please thy God.

Whatever thou hearest or seest, take all in  
good part, excusing in simplicity of heart.

“Let thy tongue ever speak of holy things ;  
be careful to utter no vain, idle, or offensive  
words.

“Be meek towards all ; take edification from  
the good, and implore the grace of God with  
tears.

“Never regret having done well. Shun vain  
things ; strive to advance in a spiritual life ;  
always believing thou hast hitherto done no good ;  
beginning again and again with new devotion  
and fervour.

“Avoid all negligence in doing good, and all  
dissipation of mind, as the devil shuns the cross.

“Be patient under all that is sent thee, either  
from God or man, remembering thy sins.

“When thou perceivest thyself to exceed in  
food, dress, and other useless things, reform thy  
conduct.

“Forgive injuries and insults from thy heart :  
seek no revenge ; on the contrary, render good  
for evil.

“Deal simply with thy neighbour, without de-  
ceit or flattery ; acting with charity, and afford-  
ing him assistance.

“Overcome temptations and other diabolical  
things by good works, and by disclosing them  
to thy spiritual father.

“If thou wouldest advance in a spiritual life,  
mortify in thyself every desire that is not quite  
good, and quite correct.

“Consider how dissimilar thy life is to the life of Jesus Christ, and study to imitate Him in patience, poverty, charity, obedience, and perfect holiness.

“Have zeal for the honour of God in all places, in all occurrences, and at all times.”

To these may be added the instructions which Ippolito gave in his last illness to one of his spiritual sons, with a view to his being able to govern the Institute.

“Remember to put a curb on thy tongue in moments of trial and turbulence. Listen but little to tattlers. Excuse every one. Recommend thyself to God. Rely not too much on thine own judgment, consult thy spiritual father and prudent men. As far as possible, show no passion under any occurrence, lest enemies and contradictors of the work of God, should take courage to attack the work; not altogether out of malice, but from ignorance, or through the instigations of the devil.

“Remember the work is that of God, not thine: often examine whether thou mixest with it anything of thine, or of thy own satisfaction, if so, remove all that does not belong to God.

“If thou meetest thy enemy, salute him good-humouredly, and serve him if thou canst. Speak not of thy affairs but to those whom it may be needful. Answer courteously: show as little superiority as possible; and correct with charity when necessary.

“Above all, let the poor be recommended to thee; treat them kindly; be affable and help



them when thou canst: make much account of them. Honour persons of distinction; give them the place that belongs to them, that their indignation may not be excited.

“Listen willingly to correction, and thank him who gives it thee. Seek to be looked upon as vile; make thyself, as it were, a madman and a fool for the love of God; but when His honour is concerned, show prudence, be zealous and fear no one, saying, ‘If God be for us, who shall be against us?’

“Be sparing in thy food, especially with persons who are above thee; and even in all places.

“But above all, remember to do nothing from ostentation; but only for the honour of God, and the edification of thy neighbour.

“Have as little intercourse as possible with women, although spiritual and good; not even with nuns or young girls: never be familiar with any one.

“Act modestly; be not too lenient, especially with the immoral. Caress the virtuous and encourage them: tolerate no levity, not even in slight things. Leave not thy children too much together without some guide: trust not to every one; and be wary in this respect, because it is easy to be mistaken.

“If thou wouldest succeed with youth, teach them to show respect and deference to their seniors, and to respect each other. Allow no raillery or buffoonery, because it is the ruin of the soul, and often of the body too.

“Remember, if thou wouldest benefit them,

thou must give them good example : never let them see thee perform an unbecoming action, or hear thee utter an idle word. With men, especially the poor who are dull, prudence is requisite to induce them to do well : help them when thou canst : listen to them willingly on matters of salvation ; if they wish to introduce other subjects, strive dexterously to dismiss them, but in such a manner as not to offend. When thou shalt have done all this, prepare thyself to suffer ; and if it should appear to thee that thou art unjustly treated, take it as medicine, reflecting on what was done to Jesus Christ our Lord."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### HIS JUSTICE.

He may be said to possess the virtue of justice, who yields what is due to his Creator, to himself, and to his neighbour. We need not repeat how much the servant of God signalled himself in this virtue ; his actions, as already detailed, prove it ; a few further remarks will suffice to demonstrate his right to the title of a Christian hero. His unvarying conduct shows the spirit of his piety, and that he paid due worship and honour to God at all times ; this being a tribute from which the most just are not exempt. Let us recall to mind the manner, so full of faith and charity, with which

he performed all his religious duties, even from his earliest age ;—again, the high veneration he professed for the passion and death of our Saviour ;—the admirable recollection and love with which he daily received the Bread of Angels ;—his fervent prayer, especially mental, which raises our thoughts to the eternal truths ;—the most holy mysteries to which Ippolito devoted all his spare time, so that he might be compared to the angel mentioned by Isaiah, who, with out-spread wings, ever stands before the throne of the Most High. Add to this, his attention never to lose sight of the Divine presence ; his utter abhorrence of whatever was the least offensive to God ; his remarkable inclination to piety, his purity of heart, his zeal in casting the seed of the Divine word in the souls of his brethren ; his watchfulness never to transgress the commandments, and to follow the evangelical counsels ; his grief when he heard of insults and outrages offered to the Divine Majesty, and his incessant endeavours to remove scandals and extirpate abuses. Finally, we may form an idea of his zealous justice towards God, from his efforts to promote His glory.

He who renders what is due to God, ought likewise to exercise justice towards himself, because, though our duties may be various, there is but one end to which they ought to be directed.

Ippolito kept this divine lesson engraved in his heart, “ He who loves his soul, shall lose it ; he

who hates his soul in this world, shall possess it in eternal life ;” hence he preferred the interests and salvation of his soul to everything else, hating it in this world with that salutary hatred, which will make it hereafter worthy of the reward for which it was created by God, and which will lead it to everlasting enjoyment. Hence arose his vigilance in keeping the flesh subject to the spirit ; in never swerving a step from the path he had entered upon ; his fervour of spirit, persevered in until death ; his care on no occasion, and under no trial, to interrupt his progress in perfection ; his perfect conformity and resignation to the Divine will ; all of which were means, used by Ippolito, to render justice to himself, and thus place his salvation in security.

Neither was he less attentive in accomplishing all that was due from him to his neighbour. In regulating his institute, he had to choose masters and superintendants, but in this he was never influenced by human respects ; the most capable and the most worthy were always the objects of his choice. In imposing penances, justice, not impetuosity, guided him ; the same may be said of his distribution of premiums and rewards among the children. But setting aside this sort of justice, let us offer a remark or two on his caution in speaking of the fame and honour of his neighbour. He was so circumspect in this particular, that one who was intimate with him through the whole course of his life, affirmed without any fear of untruth, that he

had never heard a word pass his lips, that could sully or lessen the good opinion of another. In speaking, he showed every consideration for others, and always excused their failings. When in company with any one who censured the conduct of others, he would admonish the person, to be more reserved in speaking of such matters ; and he always spoke of his own persecutors and enemies with compassion, if not with respect.

The holy Fathers specify three virtues as being the daughters of justice, namely, gratitude, affability, and holy sincerity ; all of these were possessed by Ippolito in an eminent degree. There was no time in which he did not show himself grateful for the divine favours, both general and particular. Before he retired to take his brief repose, it was his custom to recall to mind the favours conferred by our Lord, especially during the past day, thanking Him most affectionately ; acknowledging how great they were, considered either with regard to the dignity of the Giver, or the unworthiness of the recipient. Neither did Ippolito fail in gratitude towards his benefactors. When pious persons furnished him with alms, his first thought was to implore a heavenly remuneration for them : he continually reminded his brethren never to cease recommending their benefactors to God, more especially such as were deceased, for whom he perpetually procured suffrages.

His affability was equal to his gratitude, which, when springing from a right principle, forms

a part of justice. Although he was the founder of the institute, and was by office the first amongst the brethren, so far from anything imperious, (unless he had to correct some public fault or inobservance of the rules,) he acted with the greatest gentleness and cordiality, listening to all, and treating all alike, not even excepting the lowest brother. We have stated elsewhere, that many persons had recourse to him, and asked his opinion: he showed the same affability and courtesy to them all; and when, as we have said, the sick called for him, no matter what their rank might be, he went without demur, anxious to gratify and console all.

In fine, knowing how much our Lord abominates duplicity, the servant of God ever showed himself a lover of holy sincerity: leaving knavery, deceit, and fraud to the world, he cherished as his treasure the portion which our Lord Jesus Himself so often recommended to His spouse Maddalena de' Pazzi, and which He called simplicity of word, simplicity of action. We find in the processes, that those persons who were most intimately acquainted with him, all concur in stating, that they never perceived in him the slightest shadow of double-dealing; on the contrary, they ever found him frank, sincere, truthful, and endowed with that simplicity of the dove which our Divine Master so strongly recommended to His disciples.

## CHAPTER IX.

## HIS TEMPERANCE AND MORTIFICATION OF THE FLESH.

TEMPERANCE, in its general sense, may be defined as the moderator of human passions, and must, therefore, be the inseparable companion of him who would walk in the path of evangelical perfection: guided by it, Ippolito subjected those enemies which make war upon us to the empire of reason, being ever careful to hold dominion over himself. But as this will be more amply detailed elsewhere, we need here only consider this virtue according to the idea which the angelical Doctor S. Thomas gives of it. Temperance, then, strictly speaking, consists in the perfect moderation of the sensitive appetite, with respect to food, drink, and all that the human senses covet; it is evident, therefore, that sobriety and abstinence may be called the daughters of temperance, in which virtue our servant of God was so well grounded as always to observe the just limits. The coarsest and vilest food was his delight, and his meals were always seasoned with the spice of mortification. Seldom did he taste either flesh or fish, his usual diet being bread, fruit, and vegetables, which he said agreed best with his constitution. His spirit of mortification taught him how to punish his taste so as never to relish even the poor food which his humble state allowed him. In eating he was

so sparing, that the greater part of his portion was reserved for the poor. His abstemiousness would not have been so wonderful if not coupled with fasting, to which he was addicted to the end of his life. He fasted three days in the week, especially on Friday in memory of the Passion of our Lord. But these were not the only proofs which Ippolito gave of his holy hatred of self: he made himself the executioner of his own body, using all possible means of torturing it: from his childhood he wore a rough hair-shirt, to reduce it to that slavery which the apostle enjoins.

The most severe of his penances were inflicted in the night, sometimes he used iron disciplines, sometimes knotted cords, and on these occasions he scourged himself so unmercifully that the floor of his room was sprinkled with his blood. However wearied he might feel, he never spared his body, even his short rest was little else than torture: he slept on the ground or on a hard board. At the age of thirty, obedience to his confessor somewhat moderated his austerities, and he slept on a wretched mattress stuffed either with chopped straw, or hay, which he used in joke to call wool from the fields.

We must not fail to notice the rigorous guard he kept over his senses. Knowing that the eyes are generally the betrayers of the soul, he so far mortified them as scarcely to allow them those gratifications which even virtue permits; as the following incident will show. One evening Ippolito and a friend of his, were crossing one of the most frequented streets of Florence, in



which there was a sculptured figure of a centaur. Contrary to custom, the former raised his eyes, and by the light of the moon perceived the figure, noticing it to his companion, as something quite new: the other in surprise, said, "Why, don't you know that centaur has stood there for at least fifteen years." The servant of God answered that he had never seen it before; and though his companion wanted him to stop a moment to admire it, he declared that as long as he lived he would never look at it again, as an act of mortification. Yet more:—in vain did people try to call his attention to the two famous statues, one representing David, by the far-famed Buonarrotti; the other representing Hercules, by the celebrated Bandinelli; the beauty of these two pieces attracted every one's attention. In a word he was so cautious in looking even at indifferent objects, that we may with truth say, he kept his eyes in a state of perpetual subjection.

Nor was he less rigorous in moderating his tongue; knowing how much it contributes to dissipation of mind, he held so strict a guard over it, that beyond spiritual conferences, he allowed it not the slightest liberty. Solitude, so dear to the saints, was his delight. That he might keep his mind more recollected, and more united with his good Jesus, he sought the most retired places apart from the crowd. With this object he frequently withdrew to the oratory at Fiesoli, to enjoy in solitude the presence of his beloved Lord. He would most willingly have spent all his days in sweet retirement, if in

submission to the advice of superiors he had not felt himself obliged to attend to the advantage and salvation of souls. On this subject he used to say, "We must leave God for God; and step from repose in God, to labour for one's neighbour."

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## CHAPTER X.

### HIS PURITY.

It is no common thing to find a man who knows how to preserve the fair lily of purity amidst the dangers and seductions of the world. It is this virtue which makes men in some degree equal to the angels; but it is a treasure which we carry in a very brittle vase; great indeed must be our care, our watchfulness and toil, if we would preserve it intact, and secure it from the stratagems of the powerful enemy, which dwells within us, and which never ceases redoubling its efforts to rob us of our treasure. When very young, Ippolito began to understand the value of this virtue; he spared no pains to preserve it from all that might sully it, even in the least. Diligent custody of the senses, rough hair-shirts, rigorous fasts, prolonged austerities and fervent prayer, were the means he employed for the preservation of his purity; and it was constantly believed that he lived as he was born, chaste and in the possession of virginal purity. Let it suffice to take a

glance at what was deposed in the processes on this subject. The confessors who had long been entrusted with the secrets of his conscience, bore witness to this; and let the reader remember, that the Carmelite Father Leoni, who was the last person to receive the confessions of Ippolito, desired that after his death his temples should be encircled with a garland of flowers, as is the practice with regard to young virgins. Finally, we may add what Ippolito himself confided to one of his beloved companions: namely, that, thanks to the goodness of God, he had preserved his body as it issued from his mother's womb. It is not so easy, however, to give a correct idea of his surpassing modesty and propriety of conduct. The heavenly look which beamed in his countenance, often extinguished in others some less chaste affection, and enkindled a love of purity. Many, struck by his example, became lovers of this virtue, and even bound themselves to it by vow. If he met with any one who uttered dissolute or obscene words, the fervent zeal of Ippolito was aroused, and without human respect he boldly reproved the licentious speaker. The most beautiful seducer could never boast of cheating him of so much as a momentary glance. Appointed as he was at a very early age to teach the principles of faith both to boys and girls, there was no one who could ever say they had seen the least levity, or an improper gesture or look in him. It pained him to give instructions to females; and though compelled to do so by obedience for a time,

he at last decided on requesting his confessor to dispense him from this duty. In effect, not long afterwards, the parish-priest of S. Lucia, relieved him entirely from this trying duty. He refrained from intercourse with women, even such as were spiritual, unless necessity or the salvation of souls required it ; and in these cases he used the greatest circumspection : he never prolonged the discourse beyond what was strictly necessary, and spoke in suitable, but concise terms ; he always wished others to be present, avoiding a private interview, lest any suspicion should arise with regard to purity. In a word, Ippolito was so reserved, that we may almost say he was jealous of himself. None of his family, or most intimate friends, ever saw any part of his body uncovered, excepting his face and hands. In his illnesses, his greatest suffering arose from his being obliged to relax a little of his severity in this respect, and accept the assistance of others ; and he recommended such modesty and caution to these assistants, that the most bashful maiden could not have been more particular.

If Ippolito was careful in watching over this beautiful virtue, he was also equally anxious to persuade others to do the same. He recommended this strongly to the brethren, adducing for this purpose the most suitable rules given by the fathers and spiritual masters. "My brethren," said he to them, "if you wish to keep yourselves pure, you must diligently guard your senses, especially your eyes, because by them death commonly enters the soul ; shun the com-

pany of the luxurious and the lascivious; attach yourselves to the good, shun idleness as a pest, and as the enemy of chastity; excite yourselves to fasting and other corporal mortifications. Banish from your mind all dishonest thoughts, because it is better to be free from, than to combat this vice; when tempted, recommend yourselves with confidence to God, repeating these verses, 'Lord, I suffer violence, answer Thou for me. O Lord, come to my aid! Create a clean heart in me, O God!' Fail not particularly to implore the assistance of the most Holy Virgin Mary, our most pure and spotless Mother." Such were the useful counsels dictated by Ippolito, jealous both in himself and others, for the preservation of the beautiful flower of purity.

It must not, however, be supposed, that Ippolito was exempt from that dreadful temptation with which the angel of darkness usually assails the true followers and the most perfect lovers of this virtue. It not unfrequently happened that the fiend came to the combat, and such was the force of the incentives with which he strove to stain his modesty, that even the most indifferent things became stumbling-blocks to him; however, if Ippolito was unable at once to calm the motions of the flesh, and expel concupiscence from his mortal frame, he at least took care it should not rule; hence, like the royal prophet, he besought grace of our Lord to keep his rebellious senses in subjection. Moreover, he desired that the fear of God, which

dwelt in his mind, might also extend to his body, enabling him to suppress all the impulses of the flesh. Whilst Ippolito most earnestly begged strength of God to curb his flesh, he did not leave the whole cause to God ; on the contrary, he took the weapons in his own hands, and tortured his body with fastings, watchings, hair-cloths, and other austerities, till he actually had more the appearance of a corpse than of a living man ; then it was that his confessor felt obliged to moderate his penances, for they rendered him unequal to labour for the benefit of his neighbour. Ippolito bowed to the decisions of his spiritual father, and this act of humility and obedience was so pleasing to God, that He did not afterwards permit the rebellious senses to distress His servant, who, to render due glory to God, would not conceal this favour, but owned to some of his brethren, that he felt no more of the sting of the flesh, than if he had been turned into a wooden or marble statue.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### HIS ADMIRABLE FORTITUDE AND PATIENCE.

IF we would cast an eye over the whole course of the life of Ippolito, we might safely affirm there was no time when he did not give full proof of his admirable fortitude. Whether we consider his unvarying constancy in the service of God, or his unshaken resignation under his long and

uninterrupted series of persecutions and adversity, or his invincible patience under his distressing maladies, we shall ever find in him the same heroic fortitude. Holy Scripture tells us that the just man advances in wisdom, and compares him to the sun, which imparts light, heat, and vivifying power, without injury to itself; it still remains the same. So in like manner the just man, tenacious of his purpose, far from losing an atom of the virtues already acquired, strives rather to increase and confirm them, and as far as possible to double them, in imitation of the true Sun of justice, Jesus Christ, of whom it is written, "He grew, and waxed strong in age and wisdom."

The constancy of Ippolito in pursuing the paths of justice, may be inferred from the many exercises of Christian piety which he introduced in his congregation, and which he had taught by example, before he recommended them in word. His singular innocence, his exemplary conduct, and the fervour of spirit which he displayed even in childhood, continued unchanged, and was never dimmed by any occurrence whatever. On the contrary, what would have been an occasion of fall to others, only served to strengthen him in the Divine service. In his discourses to his brethren, he constantly recommended them to resist temptation vigorously, and to advance in the career of virtue, making use of these words of our Saviour, "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back, is apt for the kingdom of heaven;" and of this other saying,

“Not to advance in the ways of God, is to recede.” After adducing these passages, he generally exposed the deceits and wiles of the malicious tempter, who strives to draw us aside from our virtuous purposes. He could not endure vacillating minds, and to those who depended on him, he would not easily allow any change in the method of their spiritual duties, giving, as his reason, an excellent comparison. “If,” said he, “a shrub is continually transplanted from place to place by a gardener, it will soon lose its natural vigour and wither; so, in like manner, our inconstancy leads to tepidity, uneasiness, relaxation of mind, and by degrees we abandon all our exercises of piety.” He exhorted his brethren often to renew their good purposes, and daily to accustom themselves to certain regular acts of virtue. Above all, he warned them to stand firm, and persevere in the service of God; endeavouring to attach them to holy mortification, which, like salt, prevents the corruption of the flesh, and destroys those depraved affections of the soul, which seduce it from its holy purpose.

If our saint proved that he possessed this virtue, by the constancy with which he pursued the path of perfection, he likewise showed his fortitude by courageously confronting, and patiently enduring, the severest tribulations. The injuries and calumnies of men, which God sometimes permits in order to increase the merits of His servants, are the touch-stone which securely tests their virtue. In the course of our narrative,



many such instances have been recorded, and the repetition of them is superfluous. Each one may form an idea of the invincible fortitude which must have armed the heart of Ippolito, since it enabled him to resist such violent persecutions, and to overcome the natural weakness of humanity, so far as to make a sacrifice of all to the Lord. His trials and griefs were augmented by the very circumstance of their being caused by his ungrateful and rebellious sons; but in these cases he redoubled his courage, and his lively confidence in the strong God who giveth victory. Firm in his belief that the Lord disposes all things for our good, he often said that we ought to receive all things equally from His hand, trials, or consolations; that God tries and trains us by means of crosses; that it behoves us to place all our confidence in Him; and as the storm depends on God, so likewise does the calm. Grounded as he was in these maxims, so far from being depressed by occasions of suffering, he rather rejoiced; and those things which look like trials to weak minds, were to him signal instances of divine favour. Hence, when the jealousy of his brethren drove him from place to place; when he was accused at the tribunals, (generally through the machinations of his own children,) when even his life was threatened, he endured all, forgave all, and continually prayed to God for the amendment of the evil-minded. When the few brethren who remained faithful to him, expressed their sympathy and regret at seeing him thus unjustly assailed, he, full

of meekness and confidence, exhorted them to patience and resignation ; and by the cheerfulness of his countenance, displayed the virtuous tranquillity of his soul, recalling to mind the incident related of our Lord, who calmly slumbered during the storm at sea amidst the terror and alarm of His disciples.

But to form a due estimate of his fortitude, we must not merely consider his courage and resignation under the unjust persecutions and calumnies of men. His severe and dangerous maladies are also trials with which our Lord is accustomed to test the virtue of His servants, purifying them in the same manner as gold is rendered more pure and lucid in the furnace. Ippolito was tried in this manner almost from his birth to his death : he was liable to fevers, which often reduced him to extremity : he was covered with wounds from head to foot, and he once lost his hearing for a long time. He suffered from violent colds, and for fourteen years he had a wound on his chest, occasioned by his austerities, but which he concealed from the knowledge of every one. In addition to the sufferings occasioned by these complicated maladies, Ippolito had to bear every other sort of cross, and he did so without ever uttering a word of anguish or complaint. Supported by his heroic fortitude, he was always cheerful and happy ; instead of repining under his overwhelming afflictions, he truly rejoiced in being able to give a new proof of his love for God, and of resignation to His divine will.

## CHAPTER XII.

## HIS PROFOUND HUMILITY.

THE more vast and elevated the edifice we intend to raise, so much the more solid and deep must be its foundations. The same rule holds good with regard to spiritual edifices, which, for solidity of basis, require the most profound humility. This was well known to, and was faithfully acted upon, by Ippolito, who, aspiring to the highest perfection, sought every means of humbling himself and of being contemned. He believed himself to be wholly devoid of merit, and the most miserable sinner that ever lived on earth. He declared as much, both in public and private, owning that his sins rendered him unworthy of heaven, and deserving of a thousand hells. This conviction gave rise to his great disesteem and contempt of himself, which accompanied him through life: we need not here repeat what has been said elsewhere, of his abasement and incessant toil in behalf of poor children and of the sick, which he persevered in until death: we may, however, add, that he never desisted from his practice of good works: notwithstanding all this, he did not think that he had as yet taken one step in the service of God. Under every new infirmity he used to say, that our Lord thus visited him to admonish him of his sins, that he might amend and change his life; and though he had already made many deter-

minations, he had nevertheless always failed in his good purposes. Guided by divine light, Ippolito dived deeply into the knowledge of himself, and of his own nothingness. It was only on the actions of others that he looked with the eye of a dove. To him every one was good and innocent; nor was there any creature, however unworthy, that he thought vile and contemptible; because in them, he considered the efficacy of that power with which they might have been enriched, if our Lord had bestowed on them a portion of that light so abundantly conceded to himself. For this reason too, he earnestly recommended himself to the prayers of others, as if he himself was the least meritorious of all in the sight of God. Exact as he was in searching out his own defects, he also implored the help of other pious persons, requesting them to admonish and correct him when they thought him faulty; and he frequently asked his brethren in the congregation to admonish him without fear. He even styled his persecutors, his counsellors and masters, because, as he said, they made him fit to work. When he happened to be treated injuriously and contemptuously, the good servant of God rejoiced as much as a proud man would at hearing his own praises. A person once audaciously said to him, "Ippolito, nobody believes you!" he showed the utmost good humour under the insult; and supposing that he had at last gained his point of being looked upon as vile and base, he went away smiling. Another time some one sharply reprehended him for not having consented to some unjust demands,

and accused him of being proud. Ippolito listened calmly to the invective, and whilst the persons present showed their indignation at it, he sweetly smiled, thanked his rebuker, and falling at his feet asked his pardon. But the better to show the deep humility and admirable meekness of this great soul towards his enemies, we will narrate the following circumstance. Instigated by the spirit of darkness, some of his malicious persecutors took every opportunity of loading him with injuries, and of publicly defaming him by the blackest calumnies. Any person justly jealous of his own honour, which, according to the wise man, is the most precious of all treasures, would undoubtedly have stood up in self-defence, or would at least have testified displeasure; not so, however, did the humble Ippolito. He bowed his head with resignation when he heard of the attacks on his good name, but had no thought of vindicating it; far from resenting the outrages inflicted on his honour, he remained tranquil and placid, like Him of whom the Psalmist says, "As a man who heareth not, and who hath no reproofs in his mouth." His humility, however, only served to exasperate and embolden his perverse tormentors, who, seizing on a favourable moment, one day locked him up in a room, when they beat him most unmercifully. Our hero was not the least roused at this unexpected assault; but, in imitation of Jesus Christ, who, when ill-used, "Opened not his mouth," he did not say a single word to those cruel men, but acting towards them as christian charity dictates, he began fervently

to pray for them, that our Lord would deign to enlighten their minds. Thus act the humble followers of our Saviour, who, whilst in the agony of death, prayed to His eternal Father for His impious executioners; thus they repay the evil they receive by imploring favours for their enemies.

If our good servant of God was undisturbed by affronts, and yielded not to the feelings of weak nature on these occasions, it was not so when he heard himself praised. After having succeeded, in spite of the fierce contradictions of men, in founding his Institute, and having in every possible way promoted its honour and interests, if any one happened to congratulate with him or applaud his success, he dexterously contrived to change the subject; or if he could not do this, he answered that it was all the work of the Lord, of which he had no share of the merit. To give him the title of Founder, was quite enough to awaken his humility. His confessor, Father Zafferani, of the Society of Jesus, used to beg others never to utter a word of commendation in his presence, in order to spare his sensitive humility. To give an idea of the depth of this beautiful virtue in the soul of Ippolito, the above-named religious did not hesitate to make the following deposition in the processes: "This great servant of God was endowed with profound humility: after displaying great talent in argument, and after our Lord had by his means effected the conversion of an infinite number of sinners, he never had the slightest thought of vain-glory; never con-

sented to any one act of it; but referred all to the Lord as the giver of all good gifts; and he had such a lowly opinion of himself, that he believed himself to be the greatest of sinners, deserving of a thousand hells."

We have now made it clearly evident that our good Ippolito humbled himself at all times, in the mean opinion which he had of himself; not that he was unconscious of the gifts he had received from God; but, because he knew them to be gifts, and that as such they could not be ascribed to himself, but only to the courtesy, goodness, and beneficence of the Giver. He humbled himself also by self-contempt, concealing whatever was good in him; concealing the abundant fruit of his indefatigable labours and frequent discourses; concealing the favour which he possessed of working prodigies, as we shall show. He humbled himself, in fine, by loving to be despised, by encountering the opprobrium which was frequently drawn on him by his office; by willingly receiving blame and censure for defects into which he never fell: to all this he generously exposed himself, as well as to the reprehensions, reproaches, and bitter retaliation of his own brotherhood. These very exercises of humiliation were the steps by which Ippolito ascended to such glory, that even whilst still living on earth, he was justly called an apostle and a saint; a glory which he now fully enjoys in the bosom of his Lord.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUPERNATURAL GIFTS GRANTED BY GOD TO  
HIS SERVANT.

ALTHOUGH those gifts which theologians style "gratis data," do not constitute the essence of Christian perfection, it cannot, however, be denied that they give great weight to that heroic virtue, with which the Lord is sometimes pleased to glorify His servants here on earth; and undoubtedly (to the confusion of heresy) it perpetually maintains in the Church of Christ, a most brilliant characteristic of the truth and divinity of our holy religion. Many of these gifts are enumerated by S. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians; and though Almighty God does not always bestow them on all, but divides them according to His own supreme will, He deigned to confer a liberal share on Ippolito, in recompense for his extraordinary humility. The first of these was, the gift of prophesy, for he foresaw many things wholly impenetrable to the intellect of man. Fourteen years previous to the persecutions and intestine disturbances at the oratory, already alluded to, Ippolito, illustrated by supernatural light, had distinctly foretold them to some of his friends: "Pay attention," said he, "to what I am now telling you: a day will come when the members of the Institute will rise up against me. I shall be led before rulers both se-



cular and ecclesiastic. People will speak of me in the streets and bye-ways ; and you will see that what shall be said against me will be believed : I shall be abandoned by those who now protect me, and it will be with difficulty that I shall be able to procure bread to eat. Nevertheless, the congregation will flourish at last, and you will rejoice in your hearts." The preceding chapters will have enabled the reader to judge whether this prediction was literally fulfilled. But the prophetic spirit of Ippolito did not stop here. He foretold the birth of an heir to a nobleman who was anxious for issue, and who had begged his prayers for this purpose. When the wife of the said nobleman was near her confinement, he again called on Ippolito to desire the continuance of his prayers. Ippolito quietly bade him return home, for his lady had already given birth to a son. He went once to visit a lady whom the doctors had pronounced out of danger, but Ippolito said to her son, "Take care and watch your mother, for she will die in the course of this night;" and the prediction was but too well verified.

To another lady who was ill in the same house, whose case was given over by the doctors as hopeless, the servant of God said, "You will not die this time:" and she was quite well in a few days. As he was once conversing in the oratory of S. Domenico, he suddenly gave a deep sigh, and turning to a confidant, said, "Let us commend ourselves to God, that He may show us mercy: sixteen of our brethren, though ap-

parently of the most fervent, will cease to frequent this pious place:" and such really was the case in a very short time. To a nobleman of Florence, who was going abroad on state affairs, he said on the eve of his departure, "My son, danger hangs over thee. Recommend thyself to God, and fail not to have a mass celebrated in honour of S. Joseph, that matters may go well." On the following morning the gentleman was going out for a ride, but when in the act of mounting his horse, an altercation arose between him and the groom, when in a fit of anger, he struck him in the back with his dagger; and would probably have killed the servant if he had not found safety in flight; the master then checked himself, recalled to mind the words of Ippolito, which instantly appeased his fury. A person of rank was in the habit of frequenting the congregation, and professed much affection for it. Ippolito, however, foresaw that he would be the cause of sad disorders in the Institute; and so in fact it proved; for at the end of a few months, his favour was changed into hatred; he publicly abused Ippolito, whom he contemptuously called a mountebank; did his best to prevent others from frequenting the congregation; and even went so far as to repair to Rome, and present a memorial to the Pope for the suppression of the Institute, though without effect.

The liberality of our Lord towards His servant was not limited to the gift of prophecy, as we have already said. He would, moreover, accord prodigies to his intercession. In the year 1616,

on the festival of Pentecost, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed at the oratory to the adoration of the faithful, with all the solemnities usual at the devotion of the *quarant' ore*. By some means or other, part of the furniture caught fire, and was on the point of reaching the roof of the oratory, with every appearance of a terrible conflagration; when, however, Ippolito opposed the little cross which he always wore on his breast to the flames, to the astonishment and delight of the terrified spectators, the fire was instantly extinguished.

As he was on his journey to visit the holy house of Loretto, he met with a poor cripple lying at the foot of a tree begging alms; he was in truth a pitiful object, and the good servant of God was much moved at the sight of his misery. He approached the poor man, blessed him with the above-mentioned cross, and at that very moment he was able to stand up and walk gaily away, glorifying God. Equally wonderful was the cure of John Lapi, of Florence, who was afflicted with an inveterate disease in the left eye. The most able professors had tried their remedies, but in vain; the evil increased so far as to be beyond the reach of human aid; by the advice of that illustrious heroine of sanctity, S. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, then living, Lapi was induced to visit Ippolito; and after fully informing him of his unfortunate condition, he confidently asked him to recommend him to our Lord. To console the poor man Ippolito prostrated before his crucifix, and after a few moments

arose, invoking the most holy name of Jesus, with all the tenderness which his lively faith suggested; then he lightly made the sign of the cross on the diseased eye, the effect of which was a perfect cure. Nor was this the only occasion on which Lapi experienced the effects of the hand of our servant of God, to whom he always had recourse when his sight was in any way affected.

Laura, wife of the noble cavalier, Cesio Giral dini, was afflicted with perpetual fever, which so prostrated her strength that she was unable to leave her bed, and had actually lost her speech. Doctor Guidi and three other physicians believed her to be at the point of death, and the last sacraments were accordingly administered. The servant of God visited her, and smiled at all their sorrowful preparations. "Lady," said he, "you will recover." At the same moment he just touched the invalid on the head, when she regained both her speech and power of motion; the fever subsided, and, though she was seventy years old, she rose from her bed quite cured. He twice rescued from the jaws of death Sister Mary Deodata Macinghi, a professed nun in the convent of S. Martino at Florence. He restored the Marquis, Jacopo de Medici, tutor to the Grand-duke Ferdinand, to perfect health, when suffering from violent spasms which had deprived him of the use of his limbs. Lastly, Brother Migliorati, a Franciscan at Fiesoli; Alessandro Strozzi, a Florentine canon; Sister Mary Camilla, a nun at Florence; Giacomo Gian-

figliazzi ; Sister Adeodata Giusti, and Sister Agatha, (both belonging to the same convent ;) Francesca, daughter of the Senator Altoviti ; Michele Menotti, and Sister Oretta Buonaccorsi, a nun in the convent of S. Matteo at Acetri ; were all restored to health from various dangerous maladies through the prayers of Ippolito. These, besides many other cases which we omit, testify the goodness of God, who, as the Scripture expresses it, often makes Himself obedient to the voice of His servants, and seconds their faith and confidence with miracles.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

THE HIGH OPINION UNIVERSALLY MAINTAINED OF HIS  
SANCTITY BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER HIS DEATH.

It is not surprising that a noble soul, adorned with the most beautiful of virtues, and enriched with heavenly gifts, should obtain, even whilst yet living, that reputation for sanctity, which renders it an object of admiration and imitation ; and this, in spite of all endeavours of self-concealment. That such was the opinion formed of the servant of God, was universally notorious, not only in Florence, but also wherever his virtue was made known. From the time he first entered the arduous path of Christian perfection, every one conceived a corresponding idea of his worth ; and this opinion reached its height, when

he undertook, in the manner already related, his more austere and perfect mode of life. He excited universal astonishment. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, noble and plebeian, laic and ecclesiastic,—all made a point of eulogizing him, were happy when able to converse with him, and derived profit from his holy instructions.

To give more precise proofs of this, let us recall to mind the number and quality of the persons who looked upon Ippolito as a holy man, and a saint, even during his life-time. Many who came forward for the processes, were illustrious for dignity, learning, and virtue. Foremost as deserving special mention, stands his Holiness Leo XI.; he held Ippolito in such high esteem and veneration, as to call him the apostle of Florence. Whilst ruling that vast diocese in quality of Cardinal-archbishop, he often conversed familiarly with him, and consulted him on spiritual affairs. In justice to his merits he favoured and promoted his pious undertakings. His penetration, as already related, detected the deceits of his adversaries, when he wrote from Rome with great earnestness to the Grand-duke Ferdinand I., to whose protection he warmly recommended Ippolito and his congregation. He did still more, for on his return from Rome to Florence, when Ippolito went to pay his respects, his Eminence embraced him affectionately, and highly commended him in the presence of his whole suite, and of many nobles who happened to be with him.

His successor in the diocese, Alessandro Marzi-

medici, had an equal esteem and affection for Ippolito. He gloried in having such a man in his diocese, whose exemplary life and useful discourses withdrew so many guilty souls from their course of depravity. He was indignant when he heard him ill-spoken of, and declared himself unable to comprehend how people could seek to dim so bright a light, or doubt the integrity of so worthy a man. The Cardinals, Carlo de' Medici, Giovanni Bonsi, Alessandro Orsini, Pietro Valerio, and Antonio Grimani, the Pope's nuncio at Florence, and afterwards Patriarch of Aquileia, had the same high opinion of him; believing him to be a man of most holy life, and often repairing to the oratory to hear him discourse, always to their own great satisfaction: after his death, several of them showed the greatest interest in the compilation of the processes; and all awarded due credit to his innocence, his zeal, and his extraordinary virtue. To these worthy cardinals may be added many other illustrious dignitaries of the church. Alessandro Petrucci, Archbishop of Sienna, was accustomed to have recourse to the prayers of Ippolito, and experienced their efficacy on many occasions: he used to call Florence fortunate for possessing within its walls so inestimable a treasure. Giuliano de' Medici, Archbishop of Pisa, and Filippo Salvati, Bishop of Borgo a S. Sepolcro, spoke of him on several occasions in such advantageous terms, as plainly showed that they looked upon him as a great servant of God, and endowed with eminent virtue. So too thought Cosimo, Count of

Gerardesca, Bishop of Colle, and Antonio Ricci, Bishop of Arezzo ; the former felt great pleasure in conversing with him ; and when ill, seemed to desire nothing so much as his visits, most gratefully accepting his assistance. In fine, such was also the opinion of Tomaso Cimines, Bishop of Fiesoli, who, noticing his virtuous conduct and wonderful deeds, considered him a saint, and never spoke of him otherwise than in the most honourable and affectionate manner. It is unnecessary again to refer to the high esteem which Ferdinand I, Grand-duke of Tuscany, ever testified towards him ; nor need we dwell on the regard with which his son and successor, Cosmo II. honoured him ; it will suffice to say he followed in the traces of his father, frequently recommending himself to the prayers of the servant of God ; and on more than one occasion, when the gout confined him to his bed, he found his best relief under his acute pain, in being touched by the hand of Ippolito.

We must not, however, silently pass over the high opinion in which he was held by Cæsare, Duke of Modena, and Ferdinando Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua : the former was mainly instrumental in collecting and authenticating his virtuous deeds for the processes ; and the latter would be inscribed a member of the institute, out of respect for its holy head and founder, with whom he frequently held long conversations. The same may be said of Christina of Lorraine, Grand-duchess of Tuscany ; of the Prince Lorenzo de' Medici ; of Catarina, Duchess of Mantua, and of Claudia, Duchess



of Urbino. But above all must be named Mary Magdalen, Arch-duchess of Austria and Grand-duchess of Tuscany : she testified her high opinion of the servant of God in various ways ; but especially by promoting the processes after his death, and by erecting at her own expense a handsome vestibule for the convenience of the brotherhood in the oratory ; whereon was placed the following inscription :

D. O. M.

MARIA. MAGD. ARCID. AVSTRIÆ,

COSIMI. II. MAGNI. DVCIS. ÆTRVRIÆ

CONIVX. AVGVSTISSIMA.

OB. EXIMIVM. CHRISTIANAE. RELIGIONIS. STDIVM.

AC. SINGVLAREM. OBSERVANTIAM.

IN. V. VIRVM. HYPPOLYTVM. GALANTINIVM. FLORENTINVM.

EGREGIA. VITAE. SANCTIMONIA. CELEBERRIMVM.

ET. HVIVS. CONGREG. DOCTR. CHRISTIANAE

OLIM. AN. SAL. MDCII. SVB. D. FRANCISCI. AVSPICIIS.

INCLYTVM. FVNDATOREM.

VESTIBVLVM. HOC. QVOD. PENITVS. DEERAT.

MAXIMA. LIBERALITATE. ERIGENDVM. EXORNANDVMQVE.

CVRAVIT

PROTECTRIX. MVNIFICENTISSIMA.

PRIMARIO. LAPIDE. S. CAROLI. CARD. BORROMEI.

RELIQVIVS. MVNITO

ET. A. RMO. D. ALEXANDRO. MARTIO. MED. ARCAIEP. FLOR.

PRIDIE. NONAS. NOV. MDCXX. FELICITER. IMPOSITO.

But we should be unjust to the memory of Ippolito if we failed to give the opinion in which he was constantly held by those, who, being themselves endowed with rare and enlightened virtue,

were the better able to appreciate and pass a correct judgment upon his. Foremost of these must be mentioned, S. Camillus of Lellis, who, when founding a house of his most charitable institute, availed himself in great measure of the work of Ippolito, with whom he was on terms of the closest intimacy; the two mutually loved each other as brothers. He was equally esteemed by that heroine of sanctity, S. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, then living in the monastery of the Angels at Florence. She held frequent spiritual colloquies with the servant of God, and believed him to have reached so high a degree of sanctity and perfection, as often to ask his advice, and be guided by his wise suggestions.

That great servant of God, Father Giovanni Battista Vitelli of Fuligno, founder of the oratory of "Our Good Jesus," in the said city, often consulted Ippolito, whom he so highly venerated, that he said he considered himself happy in being able to kiss the ground Ippolito walked upon; and at the advanced age of seventy-five actually went from Fuligno to Florence, to visit (according to his own expression) the relics of a living saint. To these virtuous and illustrious names, may be added others no less distinguished for sanctity and learning; such as Father Bartolomeo da Saluzio, and Father Francesco Vecchi, S. J., the former of whom would spend whole hours in pious conference with Ippolito; whilst the latter consulted him on all his own doubts of conscience, being accustomed to say, "If Ippolito has no scruple of doing so and so, I am sure I may safely do it."

Sufficient has been said to enable the Christian reader to form a pretty accurate idea of the high opinion in which the servant of God was at all times held, by the most illustrious personages of his age ; who certainly would not have given such brilliant testimony of his sanctity, if they had not been attracted by the lustre of his admirable and exalted virtue.

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## CHAPTER XV.

MIRACLES THROUGH HIS INTERCESSION AFTER DEATH.

HIS SOLEMN BEATIFICATION.

THE high opinion of this good servant of God, was strengthened by the effects wrought by his powerful intercession. One of the means whereby our Lord usually glorifies His servants, is that of showing His liberality towards those who invoke their patronage with confidence ; and the higher the favour is beyond the ordinary course of nature, the more does the Divine Goodness intend to spread their glory in this world. Whilst still living the gift of miracles was not wanting to Ippolito, as we have shown ; but the Most High was pleased to render these far more distinguished, after he had laid aside the bands of mortality, and had flown to the blessed kingdom of peace.

It is not our intention to weave a long catalogue of all the wonders by which, after death, God was pleased to manifest his sanctity. A

few shall be selected from the many, which may be read in the processes by those who desire to see them.

Attilio Guerrini, barber and bath-keeper in the city of Florence, had a tumour on the ankle of the right-foot, occasioned by an accumulation of bad humours. Slighting medical advice, he undertook his own cure, and applied those things known by the name of cornetti, which terribly punctured the artery, and collected a still greater assemblage of matter and blood: the artery became so fearfully swollen that the evil degenerated into a regular aneurism. When surgeons were called in, they determined on applying fomentations, ointments, and plasters; these attempts failed, and recourse was had to astringents, and the tumour was compressed with a plate of lead and silver, in hopes of preventing any farther enlargement of the artery. Guerrini was unable to bear the torture occasioned by these remedies, and took off the compression-plate; determined to try some other means of checking the acrimonious humour, of diminishing it if possible, and of preventing farther swelling of the artery. He applied ointments, extracts from herbs, and milk-poultices, but all in vain. The poor man had been suffering thus twenty-seven months—nothing afforded him relief, and for the last three months he had been unable to leave his bed: he was so emaciated as to have lost all resemblance to his former self; was completely deprived of strength, lost sleep and appetite, and life itself was a burthen to him. The doc-

tors despaired of his cure ; amputation of the foot being the only chance left of saving his life : such was his state of debility, that great and reasonable fears were entertained, that he would sink under the operation ; in consequence of which he was first prudently fortified by the administration of the last sacraments. It was at this moment that Claudio Usimbaldi, a Florentine nobleman, moved to compassion at Guerrini's sad state, gave him a short account of the life of Ippolito Gallantini, and of the many miracles which our Lord had wrought by means of this His servant, and he advised the sick man to have recourse to him with confidence, and humbly to implore his aid. Guerrini willingly acceded to the pious suggestion ; the more so, as he had lately heard of several miracles obtained through the intercession of Ippolito, and felt a great devotion towards him. He, therefore, warmly recommended himself to the holy man, beseeching him to free him from his sufferings, and expressing a great wish to be blessed with a relic of him : this wish was gratified ; a pious priest who happened to be present on the 9th of January, 1623, at the time his sufferings were most intense, exhorted him to confidence in the servant of God, and then made the sign of the cross on him with one of his relics : at that same instant the pain ceased, and the patient fell into a tranquil sleep. On awaking, he found himself perfectly cured. The doctors arrived soon afterwards, and hearing him exclaim, " I am cured ! I am cured ! " imagined him to have gone mad ; but when they discovered that he

really was cured, and knew that this instantaneous cure could not have been effected by human means, they unanimously declared it to be a miracle, and together with Guerrini returned thanks for it to the Almighty.

In June 1622, Pietro Contrì, a physician at Florence, was attacked by a dangerous spotted fever, accompanied with inflammation of the brain and intense pain. All that medical skill could suggest was tried in vain. On reaching the seventh day, Doctor Benedetto Punta, fearing from the symptoms that the following day would be his last, recommended the administration of the sacraments, in consequence of which the rector of S. Maria Novella, brought him the holy Viaticum; and, understanding that the doctors gave up the case as hopeless, agreed to return the following day to administer Extreme Unction. After receiving the holy Viaticum, the sick man was informed that he had no longer any chance of life, so he entreated a pious woman, in whose house he lodged, to procure him a relic of some Saint. The idea struck her of applying a bead which had belonged to the rosary of Ippolito Galantini, and with which during his life-time he had often wrought prodigies. The invalid took it in his hand, placed it on his head with lively confidence, and fervently implored the aid of the servant of God. At that same moment the red spots vanished; the fever, inflammation, and pain, all left him, and he exclaimed, "O blessed Ippolito! O blessed Ippolito! God is wonderful in His Saints!" After this, the priest arrived to

give him Extreme Unction, and seeing him dressed and sitting up in his bed combing his beard, supposed him to be delirious, and stood awhile outside the door to watch him. Contri called him in, and told him how, having invoked the aid of the venerable Ippolito, he found himself suddenly cured. The priest could scarcely credit either the man's words or his own eyes ; but called again the next day to convince himself of the fact : instead of finding him in bed, he beheld him, to his surprise, seated at dinner, eating and drinking heartily. His recovery was complete, and he resumed the practice of his profession in full health, as if nothing had been the matter with him.

Jacopo and Isabella Ciccognini, had a daughter named Margherita, who was born not only lame, but positively crippled : her deformity increased with her age, and rendered her unable to walk. Her parents had recourse to the faculty, and on a careful examination of the child's right side, it was ascertained that the defect arose from irregular formation of the bone, and was, therefore, beyond the reach of remedy. The child had reached her fourth year and was still unable to walk, so that her mother was ashamed to take her even to church. This afflicted her very much, and the father resolved one day to carry her to the tomb of the venerable Ippolito, hoping, that as they had been intimate friends whilst the latter was on earth, he would (now that he was in heaven) listen to his earnest prayer : his pious expectation proved to be no delusion. He carried his daughter to the tomb of Ippolito, placed her

upon it, and prayed long and fervently that he would obtain the desired favour from our Lord. He then lifted her down, and gave her over to the care of a woman to carry her home ; to his great surprise he saw that she stood upright, and that her feet were both alike. The mother was hastily summoned to witness the miracle, she could scarcely believe her own eyes when she saw her child walk without difficulty ; but as the power continued, she was at length convinced of the joyful fact. Doctors were summoned to recognize the reality of the cure : they examined the child's right side, and found no longer any defect or malformation of the bone ; they were, therefore, compelled to admit the truth of the miracle. From that day, the girl was able to walk without inconvenience, and her cure was universally held to be miraculous. The three miracles just detailed were considered so positive, that they received the approbation of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, as well as of his Holiness Pope Leo XII. The reader will perhaps not be displeased if a few more are added, selected from the many juridically attested in the processes.

Sister Mary Virginia Bianchi, a professed nun in the convent of S. Clemente at Prato, was attacked by a malignant fever, which continued with such unabated violence as to reduce her to the point of death. Whilst she was in this suffering state, one of her religious sisters offered her a flower taken from the wreath that had encircled the head of Ippolito after his death. The sick nun devoutly blessed and crossed her-



self with it three times, saying, "O Ippolito, if thou art in glory, as I firmly believe thou art, I earnestly beseech thee to obtain my cure from the Lord!" Having said this, she placed the flower on her head, and fell asleep for the space of half an hour; on awaking, she found herself perfectly recovered.

Giovanni Battista Solducci was suddenly attacked by fever, of so dangerous a nature, that on the third day he was in imminent danger of death without any chance of cure. The doctors who attended him were quite decided in their opinion, and openly declared the malady to have reached such a height that all human succour was unavailing. The sufferer recommended himself with lively confidence to the servant of God, and at that very instant his pains subsided and his health was perfectly restored.

Francesco di Giovanni Magni of S. Pietro a Ponte, was at the age of about fourteen years playing with his sister, who accidentally thrust her spindle into his mouth; it penetrated as far as his throat, whence the blood poured forth most copiously: he was unable either to eat or drink, and soon lost the power of speech: the doctors unanimously declared the evil to be beyond the reach of remedy. Whilst in this deplorable state, his father thought of having recourse to the servant of God, whose fame was notorious; and he exhorted his son to recommend himself particularly to his intercession: the youth followed this paternal advice, recommended himself with full confidence to the servant of God, and had no sooner

done so than he began to talk, and was able to eat: in token of gratitude, he went to visit the tomb of his great benefactor.

The wonderful prodigies by which our Lord was pleased to illustrate the sanctity of His servant, prevent surprise at the circumstance of his fame spreading far and wide; still less can we wonder that so many pious persons should have wished to see him raised to the honours of our altars. The first to give impulse to the cause was the most pious Marzimedici, Archbishop of Florence, who had himself witnessed the brilliant virtues of Ippolito, and who deemed it necessary to proceed to the compilation of the processes. This being completed, and the documents having been transmitted to the Congregation of Rites, at the request the Supreme Pontiff signed the commission of the cause. After examining in succession, the doubts prescribed by the decrees of Urban VIII. and Innocent XI. as well upon the honour shown to the venerable servant of God, as upon the fame of his sanctity, the requisite letters were expedited by the Holy See, for duly constituting delegated judges, not only at Florence but at Modena and elsewhere, to carry on the processes with apostolical authority, on his virtues and miracles. These having been compiled and forwarded to Rome, the congregation began the triple examination, called ante-preparatory, preparatory, and general; after which the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV. of glorious memory, issued a decree dated the 13th of December, 1756, on the heroic virtues

of the servant of God: "Constare de Ven. Servi Dei Hippolyti Galantini virtutibus theologalibus and cardinalibus earumque adnexis in gradu heroico."

The disastrous events of the times interrupted the cause; it was resumed, however, under the protection of the then Grand-duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand III., in 1819; at the instances of his Excellency Cosmo Corsi, Auditor of the Roman Rota, a noble Florentine; and of the most Reverend D. Salvatore Nicolai, Compostulator of the said cause; Pope Pius VII. appointed Cardinal Pier Francesco Galeffi, to preside over the undertaking, which was happily brought to a close under the auspices of Pope Leo XII. and under the august patronage of his Serene Highness, Leopold II. son and successor of the above-named Grand-duke. On the fifth of March, 1822, the first Congregation was held in presence of the presiding Cardinal, for the examination of the miracles. The second, called Preparatory, was held in the Quirinal Palace on the 9th of December, 1823; and, finally, the third, called General, in presence of the Sovereign Pontiff himself, on the 29th of July, 1824; and on the 15th of August of the same year, his Holiness solemnly decreed the approbation of the three miracles proposed. Notwithstanding the force of the pontifical declaration, asserting the heroic virtues, and the truth of the miracles of the servant of God, the Holy See, in conformity with its rigorous discipline, proposed the doubt "whether it might with security proceed to the beatification of the

venerable servant of God, Ippolito Galantini?" and the unanimous approval of the cardinals, prelates, and consultors of the Sacred Congregation being given, the Pontiff, Pope Leo XII., took some few days more to implore divine light; and then, after celebrating holy mass in the Vatican Palace on the 29th of September, the festival of the glorious Archangel St. Michael, he published the following decree: "Tuto procedi posse ad beatificationem Venerabilis Hippolyti Galantini. The beatification of the Venerable Ippolito Galantini may be safely proceeded with." And this gave authority for the solemn beatification in the Basilica of S. Peter. The vicar of Christ selected for this solemn purpose the 19th of June, of the year of the holy jubilee, 1825; the day on which the Church celebrates the memory of the illustrious fellow-citizen of Ippolito, S. Juliana of Falconieri.





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